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# HISTORY OF GREENSBORO ALABAMA

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*By* WM. E. W. YERBY

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WILLIAM E. W. YERBY.

HISTORY  
OF  
Greensboro, Alabama  
FROM ITS  
EARLIEST SETTLEMENT

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BY

William Edward Wadsworth Yerby



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THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY

DEDICATED

**To the Memory of the Ancient Forefathers:—**

AND ALSO

TO THE PRESENT CITIZENS OF GREENSBORO, ALABAMA,

AND

TO THE SUCCEEDING GENERATION.



# Introduction

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For some years past the author has purposed writing a History of Greensboro, Alabama, and has devoted much time and labor to gathering and verifying data, with that end in view.

The facts relative to the early history of the town were obtained from the late Henry Watson, Esq., for a long period a citizen of this place, but who, soon after the close of the war between the States, moved to Northampton, Mass., where he died several years since. He was a gentleman who took more than a passing interest in events, and made notes of all important occurrences concerning the town. He kindly favored the author of these lines with the notes he had taken during his residence here.

From the late Col. John G. Harvey, the late Samuel G. Briggs, Col. George Erwin and Mr. Robert B. Waller much valuable information was derived. Various other sources were laid under tribute—files of old newspapers, ancient records, and interviews with old citizens. Of course, much of the more recent history of the town is from personal knowledge.

These pages have not been penned with any hope of reaping pecuniary reward, but because of a sincere desire to preserve the history of the author's native town in a more tangible form than the mere recollection of its citizens.

The attention of the reader is especially directed to the fact that the book does not purport to be biographical in its character, and in all cases—except in a few rare instances—the “personal” is eschewed. Men are dealt with only as they are, or have been, connected with some particular incident or institution.

## THE AUTHOR.

Greensboro, Alabama, April, 1908.

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## Chapter I

### GREENSBORO, ALABAMA—EARLY SETTLEMENT.

It was in the year 1816 that the first settlements were made in and around what is now known as Greensboro, Alabama. The pioneers came from Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, North and South Carolina.

Andrew, Caleb and Isaac Russell, three brothers, came from Baldwin county, Georgia, in 1816, and located some three to four miles east of the present court house, on the Marion road, and so far as can be ascertained, were the first white people to settle in this immediate section. Caleb and Isaac Russell resided here for a few years, and then moved to Big Black, Miss. Andrew Russell remained after the removal of his brothers, but in a year or two removed, with his large family of children, to near Providence church in Perry county. The place near Greensboro where the Russells first located was for many years known as "Russell's Ridge."

It was also in the year 1816 that John Herran settled three miles south of the present town, near the "Pickens Place," now owned by L. J. Lawson. He died in Newbern, Ala., in October, 1894, at the age of 86 years, and was buried in the Herran graveyard, situated near the spot where he first located in 1816.

The next year—1817—a number of others took up their abode in and around the present corporate limits of the town, among them being Frederick Peck, Edwin Peck, Anthony Kinard, Joseph Nail, Joseph Middlebrooks, William Lovell, Louis Stephens, Lawrence Carr, Benjamin Baldwin, James Yeates, Jason Candy, Shelby Cozine, Silas Baggett, M. Kinard, Messrs. Bennett, Davis, McConnico, Hopkins, Caldwell and Holifield.

These early settlers soon built up a small village near where the Southern University now stands, to which they gave the name of Troy. Jason Candy was the first merchant in the new village, or in fact, in the county of Greene. He is the same Candy that established the formerly well known “Candy’s Landing” on the Warrior river.

Frederick and Edwin Peck were among the earliest merchants of Troy, and became, in the after years, quite wealthy and prominent citizens of this section. The Pecks were for a long while residents of Greensboro. The family graveyard is near the former home of Frederick Peck—the lot now owned and occupied by Mrs. W. W. Powers.

John and Peter Stokes were also among the earlier settlers. They resided near the Murphy place on Tuscaloosa street, and owned hundreds of acres of land in that locality.

In these early times the country in and around Greensboro was an unbroken forest of primeval oaks, hickory, chestnut and pine. Caldwell creek was a large and beautiful stream, whose waters afforded abundant fish to all who cared to catch them. Game was plentiful—there being numbers of deer, an occasional bear, wild turkeys, and birds of all kinds. Indians frequently passed through this section. In fact, to the north, where Havana is now located, the then forest covered hills were still in possession of the savages, and large numbers of them resided there for several years after the settlement of Greensboro.

The low places to be seen in and around the Greensboro of today—the depressions on Tuscaloosa street, the one where is now located the water works, and the one west of the colored Baptist church—were extensive reed brakes, into which cattle frequently went never to come out alive, on account of the boggy nature of the soil. The reed brake extended as far up as Main street from the depression in the rear of the Moore buildings.

The early settlers went industriously to work to erect houses in which to live. To be sure they were very rude affairs—typical log huts—and as for furniture, they had none—only that they made themselves. For bedsteads they bored holes in the logs of their cabins, into which were driven pieces of wood, across which boards were laid; a three-legged stool for each member of the family, and a high bench for a table was the sum total of the furnishings for the houses. However, the inhabitants seemed contented and happy, and labored industriously to clear off the ground to make room for the crops they were to plant. The soil was rich and responded generously even to the rude cultivation given it, and large crops of grain were made each year. Cotton was not much of a commodity and the farmers gave but small attention to its cultivation. Cattle raising was quite extensively engaged in. They had but little money in those early years, but all had the necessities of life, and barter of the products of the soil largely took the place of ready cash.

### *Coming of the Preachers.*

It was then, even as now. The Methodist and Baptist preachers followed in the wake of all settlements, no matter how remote from the throbbing pulse of the great outside world. The first sermon ever preached in Greene (now Hale) county, was in the year 1818, at the

town of Troy. In that year the Rev. James Monette, a Methodist minister, cultivated a crop and preached to the inhabitants of Troy. The next year he moved to Erie, and his house in that village was used as a place of worship for some years. Rev. Robert Payne—afterward Bishop Payne—filled regular appointments there, as he did also at the house of Capt. Edward Clement in Greensboro in 1820, at which time there was no church edifice in the town.

Close in the footsteps of the Methodist ministers came the Baptists. The Rev. Joseph Ryan, a Baptist preacher, settled in Troy, and was the first Baptist preacher to come to this portion of Alabama. He founded the Baptist church at Greensboro, which was located in the eastern part of the present town, very near where stands the residence of Mrs. Walker, at the forks of the Marion and Newbern public roads.

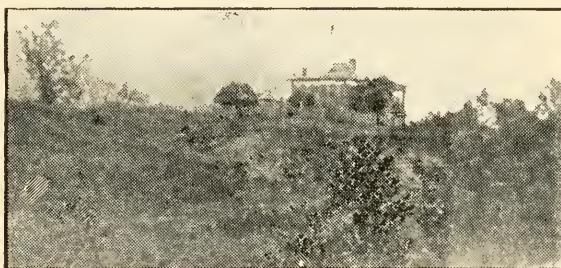
The Presbyterians and Episcopalians came later on. The first sermon preached in Greensboro by a Presbyterian minister was in 1822, by a Mr. Hunter. The same year the Rev. James Hillhouse of South Carolina, delivered his first sermon here, and established the present Presbyterian church, which was located near the Greensboro Graded School building. He died several years afterwards, and was buried in the Stokes graveyard in the northern suburbs of the town. His grave may yet be seen, as the tombstone is in an excellent state of preservation.

In 1833, the Episcopalians met and selected St. Paul's, Greensboro, as the name of the Parish, but it was not until 1840 that it was duly incorporated. The Rev. Caleb S. Ives was connected with the church at this place as early as 1834, and preached in the Presbyterian church. He was followed in 1837 by the Rev. J. S. Goodman, who in turn, was succeeded in 1842, by Rev. Julian Sawyer.

More extended notices of the various churches will be found elsewhere in this volume.

*The First Mail.*

The first United States mail ever received in Troy was brought from Cahaba, the former capital of Alabama, which was at one time a flourishing city with splendid buildings of brick and stone, fronted by yards filled with choicest flowers, and possessing a citizenship of wealth and culture. But the old town is now only a heap of ruins, and in February, 1894, the site was sold in Selma, under a tax sale, and was bid in by an ex-slave for \$550.00.

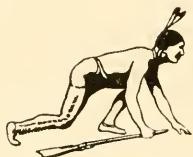


THE SITE OF OLD CAHABA.

The Capital of Alabama from 1820 to 1826. The house shown in the picture is the only one left standing of the great number of magnificent structures formerly in the Capital City. It was from this point that the first mail was brought to Greensboro; and it was also from Cahaba that the Greensboro merchants of the old days hauled their goods.

The first mail was brought to Troy in 1818, by Samuel G. Briggs on horseback, and was opened in the store of Frederick Peck, the first postmaster, on the 3rd day of September. The arrival of the mail was quite an event in the history of the little village. It had been carried to Cahaba on a barge from Blakely. The trip by the pioneer mail-rider was not unattended by dangers as he journeyed

alone through the dense forest for half a hundred miles. Mr. Briggs resided in Greensboro from its foundation to the time of his death, which occurred Feb. 12, 1895, at the age of 82 years.



## Chapter II

### FIRST HOUSES.

The first house erected in what is now Greensboro was in the year 1818, and was built by John Nelson. It was a one-room log structure, and was situated nearly opposite the store of E. A. Powers & Sons on Main street. In this small house Mr. Nelson, for about a year, sold powder, shot, whiskey, tobacco, etc. In January, 1819, he sold out to Wm. Lovell, and settled on forty acres of land on the place south of Greensboro known as Midway, and engaged in farming. He continued to purchase the rich prairie lands and, at his death in 1856, he was very wealthy, leaving property valued at over half a million dollars. He is buried in the graveyard on the Jenkins place, three miles west of town, near the public road. Mr. Nelson has a number of descendants in this section. He was a man of great common sense and business sagacity.

In 1819, several other houses were erected in Greensboro—one by Silas Baggett on the lot where the Presbyterian church now stands. He used it as a wheelwright shop, and kept the rockaways and wagons in repair.

The same year, Mr. Whitehead built a small log house near where the First National Bank now does business. This house was used as a general merchandise store.

There was another store near the Andrew Pickens place, several miles to the south of the village, kept by Jason Candy, where he did a thriving business trading with the Indians on the Jackson road—a road cut out by the troops under Andrew Jackson when on their way

to St. Stephens to quell the disturbances with Indians. There is a spring on the Rabb tract, a mile or two east of Greensboro, where it is said Gen. Jackson camped for a short while when on the mission noted above.

The next house in the present Greensboro was a log structure built by Frederick Peck on the site where now stands the two story brick building occupied by George Findlay and The Watchman office, and in this log structure Peck sold groceries and dry goods for several years. He annually went to New York City on horse back to purchase his stock of goods. For three successive seasons he made this long journey of over a thousand miles on the same horse.

In 1819 Alabama was admitted into the Union, and soon after its admission the inhabitants of the village of Troy were forced to move their place of residence, because of the fact that their town was situated on the sixteenth section, which, by Act of Congress, was reserved to every State for the benefit of the public schools.

The people gathered together all their belongings that could be moved, and located in Greensboro, or rather where the town is now situated, for the new location continued to be known as Troy until the year 1823. The original plot of "new" Troy was made in 1820 by McAlpine, surveyor, and is recorded in Book "I", page 141, Record of Deeds for Hale county.

The citizens of Troy did not regret to abandon the old town, for the horse jockeys had taken the main street for a race course; whiskey shops, or "doggeries" as they were called in those days, were numerous, and drunkenness and rowdyism were very common, and life was made miserable to the more respectable portion of the community.

In 1820 a shoe-shop was the only thing located on the lot on which is now situated Dr. Carson's residence and sanitarium, and deGraffenried & Evins' law office. It was a small frame building in which James Yeates resided

and repaired the footwear of the inhabitants of the little village.

The same year (1820) Samuel G. Briggs located in "new" Troy and opened a hotel in a small house that stood where Thomas H. Jones' residence is located. Just across the street from him was a tailor's shop kept by a man named Clark.

Troy seems to have grown rapidly at this period, for at the beginning of 1821, the number of stores had increased to five. Malone and Lake kept one on the lot immediately west of the First National Bank; Blanton and McAlpine had a bar room on a part of the present hotel lot; William Lovell also conducted a saloon on the east corner of the Dorman block; Frederick Peck, as before noted kept a general store on the lot where stands the two-story building formerly known as the Shackelford building; and J. A. Wemyss kept a stock of goods in a store where the Greensboro hotel now stands. Absalom Alston had a hotel on the lot where the M. D. L. Moore stores are located; Miles Johnson also conducted a hotel in a frame house located on the Dr. Peterson residence lot, and still another was located on the present court house lot, and was conducted by Edward Clement.

The buildings in which these men of a past generation did business were very rude affairs—most of them being constructed of logs, the cracks being "chinked" with mud—and those in which lumber or plank was used were considered fine structures. The passage of more than three-quarters of a century has wrought wonders, for where stood the extremely modest homes and business houses of the ancient forefathers are now to be found splendid buildings of brick, and homes of the most beautiful architectural type.

*The First Lawyers.*

In 1822, Ezekiel Pickens opened the first law office in the village in a house that stood on the present Dugger

old homestead lot. The second was opened the same year by W. C. Chapman near where the Steinhart Grocery store is located. The latter part of the same year, John Erwin came from Kentucky and located. He resided first in a log house situated on the lot in the rear



HON. JOHN ERWIN,

Who came to Greensboro in 1818, where he resided until his death in 1860. He was among the most able lawyers in Alabama and took a very prominent part in the Secession Convention.

of the Greensboro hotel, and opened a law office in a room near where stands the building in which the First National Bank does business. He was a man of strong intellect and business ability, and in the after years attained to prominence and amassed a fortune.

*Manner of Travel.*

There were no railroads in this entire section in the

early days, and the manner of travel to distant points was either on horseback, in buggies or by stage coach. The merchants frequently rode horseback to New York and Philadelphia to purchase their stocks of goods, which they had shipped to Mobile by water, thence to Cahaba, from which latter place the goods were hauled in wagons to Greensboro. The writer has often heard Col. John G. Harvey relate the fact that he was on his way to New York on horseback in 1833 when the stars fell. It was interesting to hear him describe the grandeur of the celestial display; but he would admit that a person was not in a condition of mind to go into ecstacies over it while the stars were falling, but the beauty and grandeur came to the mind later on, when all sense of the danger of the arrival of the general judgment day had passed. The Colonel related that he was somewhere in North Carolina at the time, and he was specially impressed with the rarefied atmosphere the next day. He never remembered to have breathed air so pure and bracing. A lame horse would always remind the Colonel of the experience of '33, on account of the fact that the one he was riding to New York was lame at the time of this meteoric shower—which has gone down into history as the most phenomenal on record.

The financial crisis of 1825 was severely felt in Greensboro, and from 1825 to 1828 there were many bankruptcies, which created much business for the lawyers, who prospered greatly. This over, there came a lull, till the fearful crisis of 1837, when the financial fabric of the entire Union seemed to be ripped from top to bottom, and the whole nation nearly became bankrupt, and the effects of which continued until 1842 and 1843, at which later date the people of Greensboro seemed to have somewhat recovered from the shock. During the period the lawyers, clerks of courts, sheriffs and all judicial officers flourished.

For a graphic and true picture of the disastrous panic of 1837, the reader is referred to "Baldwin's Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi," wherein the author has portrayed the woes and miseries the people underwent during the period succeeding the "bursting of the bubble." Thousands upon thousands of acres of land in this section went under the hammer of the auctioneer when settlement day came after the fictitious fortunes that had been accumulated on a mere promise to pay had been swept away by one stroke of "Old Hickory" Jackson's pen. The wreck and ruin that strewed the financial pathway of that period served as danger signals for many long years—and there are those living in this day and generation who have learned from a study of the fearful crisis of 1837, that it does not pay, in the long run, for a person to become rich on a credit.

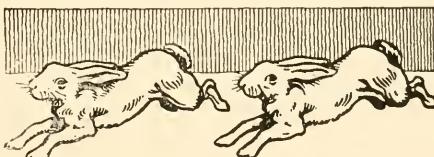
*Rode Him on a Rail.*

Back in the early days, when Greensboro was going through the formative period, there were quite a number of the rough and lawless element within its borders. Occasionally one of these would act so very badly that the better class of citizens would become outraged, and take the matter of punishment of the offender into their own hands.

In a log house located near where the residence of W. W. Overstreet now stands on Main street, there resided a man who frequently whipped his wife severely. He would be fined for the offence by the justice of the peace, but this did not seem to have the effect of stopping him. One night he gave his wife an unusually severe whipping. The matter became generally known next day, and some of the citizens—of the number Capt. John Cocke, Col. Scott, William Hopper and Richard Hatter—decided that they would endeavor to cure the offender of his wicked doings, so they got a good stout rail and placed it where

it could be gotten hold of handily, and waited for the wife beater to come up town. In an hour or two he made his appearance, and seated himself in front of a little store where Northup & Hanna now do business. Capt. Cocke crossed over the street and engaged him in conversation, totally foreign to the subject of wife-beating. The culprit was whittling with a large, ugly-looking knife, and the Captain watched for a favorable opportunity to knock it out of his hand, but the man seemed to suspect something and kept close watch on him. Seeing the dilemma, Col. Scott crossed over to where the two men were talking, and soon caught the man off his guard. He picked his chance, and with a vigorous kick, landed the knife in the middle of the street. Cocke and Scott grabbed their victim and held him until the rail was brought by Hopper and Hatter. Other citizens joined in, and placed the man on the rail and held him on it, while others put the ends on their shoulders and paraded up and down Main street, singing at the top of their voices: "Here's the man what whips his wife!" After punishing him in this manner for some time, the fellow was given his liberty, with the injunction that if the citizens ever heard of his striking his wife they would take him out and wear the hide from him with switches.

The admonition was heeded, and this sort of conduct on the part of the fellow was never heard of again.



## Chapter III

### THE PASSING OF TROY—GREENSBORO—VARIOUS CHARTERS AND AMENDMENTS.

In December, 1823, Abijah Peck and others made application to the Legislature of Alabama for a charter of incorporation for the town of Greensborough, in the county of Greene and on the 24th of that month the Act of incorporation was passed. Its chartered name was “the Intendant and Council of the Town of Greensborough,” and the incorporation was “endowed with the same powers and privileges and subject to the same restrictions and regulations in all their proceedings and governed in the same manner as is provided in an Act to Incorporate the Town of Montgomery, passed on the 3rd day of December, 1819.” And thus was Greensboro first given a name and a habitation on the map.

#### *Horse Racing.*

Among the first ordinances passed by the Intendant and Council under this charter was one to prohibit horseracing through the Main street.

The spirit of the old Trojans had become quite prevalent, and the rougher element from the outlying districts made a practice of coming to town and running horse races up and down what is now the Main street of Greensboro. In addition to the enactment of the ordinance prohibiting this conduct, several of the prominent gentlemen of the town banded together, and informed the “sports” that they must discontinue their practice; in fact, our

notes recite that the aforesaid gentlemen made their lecture to the lawless element more forcible by having their pistols with them, and informing the offenders that if they were guilty of running races on the Main street again they would be shot from their horses. This had the desired effect, and the "jockeys," in the after years—1834—made another track two miles west of town near the plantation known as the Jenkins place, and kept up the sport for a number of years. It finally fell into disuse in this section altogether, and there has not been a horse race in Greensboro for many, many years.

But to go back a little: A note before us says that on an extra gala occasion in Greensboro in the days of the reign of the "jockeys," that as a bunch of the racers came dashing up the street at break-neck speed, one of the horses flew the track and ran into a dogwood thicket where the old Whelan residence (now owned by Mrs. Ricard) stands, and killed the jockey. The name of the unfortunate fellow is forgotten, and even the place of his burial was not remembered by our informant.

During the period between 1823 and 1832, the citizens of Greensboro seem to have allowed their charter to lapse from non-use, for on January 21, 1832, the Legislature passed an Act "To revive, repeal in part and amend an Act to Incorporate the Town of Greensborough in the county of Greene, approved December 24, 1823."

By this Act the following taxes only could be assessed and collected:

1. Not exceeding one-fourth of one per cent on real property.
2. A poll tax of \$1 on each white male inhabitant over the age of twenty-one years.
3. Not exceeding \$1 each on all four-wheeled pleasure carriages.
4. On all retailers of liquors, goods and merchandise, not exceeding \$10 per annum.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the income of

the town was quite small, but the expenses were equally so. The officers received no salaries. The Intendant was allowed to charge only a small fee for the trial of criminal offences, and the Constable was also allowed to charge a nominal fee for making arrests, but it was a rare occurrence for a case to be reported to the Intendant. Nearly all the cases for breach of peace, if reported at all, were carried before the Justices of the Peace, whose courts were kept quite busy at times—and all were white people who were tried, as the negroes were slaves, and were rarely ever guilty of violating the laws either of the town or the State.

The corporate limits of the town at this time were the quarter section—160 acres—and so remained until January 12, 1833, when they were extended to embrace the residence and lots now owned and occupied by Charles E. Latimer. The object of the extension was to relieve the owner—John Marast—of the duty of working the public road outside of the town.

*Addition to Greensboro.*

In 1835 a further proposed addition was made to the town of Greensboro. At that time the corporate limits extended west only to the cross street dividing the Stollenwerck old homestead from the N. L. Castleman place. What is known as McAipine's addition was, in 1836, sold at public sale. The following is a copy of the original advertisement of the sale:

NOTICE—LAND AT AUCTION.

Will be sold to the highest bidder, at auction, on the third Monday in January next, all of that tract of land known as the McAipine tract and designated as the South West Quarter of Section 17, Township 20, and Range 5, East.

The said land will be sold out in lots of various sizes, containing from one-fourth of an acre to six acres, with streets from 66 to 75 feet wide. The above tract of land is situated immediately

West and adjoining the Town of Greensborough, Green County, Alabama.

Persons wishing to reside in the said town or its immediate vicinity, would do well to examine the above premises, in person, previous to the day of sale. Some of the lots have beautiful groves and elevated situations for building—one of them containing four acres, is very well improved, having on it a comfortable frame dwelling, all other necessary out houses, a good garden, excellent well of water, and a fine peach orchard.

The undersigned Commissioners, will give to the purchaser or purchasers, a certificate for the lot or lots they may purchase; deeds given by them when the last payment shall have been made.

Terms of sale, one-third cash, and the balance in one and two years. Notes with good securities, will be required. Sale to commence at 10 o'clock and continue from day to day.

J. C. McALPINE,  
WILLIAM McALPINE,  
JOHN N. McDOWELL,  
*Commissioners*

A plat of the above lots may be seen by calling at the Beacon of Liberty Printing Office.

Greensboro'. Dec. 23, 1835.

The McAlpines were prominent citizens of Greensboro for a number of years.

### *Early Social Life.*

The social life of Greensboro has always been pleasant, even from the earliest days. Refinement and culture were brought here with the greater portion of the early settlers, and the children of the pioneers were given the best advantages available in the matter of education.

After the downfall of the great Napoleon at Waterloo, many of the French people who were identified closely with the Napoleonic party fled the country—one of them, J. J. Cluis, cultivated a farm near Greensboro in the early thirties. He had been a man of considerable note during the reign of Napoleon and was at one time an aide to the famous Marshal Lefebvre, the Duke of Rivigo, who was afterwards at the head of the police department of Paris. Colonel Cluis was then his secretary. At another time Cluis had the custody of Ferdinand VII, King of Spain,

while he was imprisoned by Napoleon. Like the balance of the refugees, he found the cultivation of the vine and the olive an unremunerative business in Alabama, and became quite a poor man, but was always proud, and seemed to live back in the past when the world trembled beneath the onward march of the great "Army of the Republic" of which he was an honored member. In order to sustain life, this once famous man kept a hotel or tavern in Greensboro for some time. He moved from here to Mobile, where he died a few years afterwards.

Quite a number of other French people settled in this immediate neighborhood, and lent the charm of their manners and the elegance of their deportment to the social life of Greensboro in the long ago. Their descendants are yet to be found in this section.

The tournament was in great vogue in those days, and elaborate preparations were made for the exciting sport. Gallant knights came from miles around to participate in the tourney. Their costumes were splendid, and the plumed knights, as they rode in a body to the grounds, presented a fine appearance. The crowning of the Queen of Love and Beauty was attended with much pomp and ceremony, and was a great occasion.

Parties and dances were numerous. The dances were always given at private homes, and the host and hostess of the occasion spread a most sumptuous repast, at which champagne and wine flowed freely. The attire of the ladies was of the latest fashion and of the finest materials, and that of the gentlemen was of broadcloth. At the dances only the old Virginia reel and the stately minuet were danced—the German, with its many intricate figures, being an unknown accomplishment among the dancers of the old time. When the vivacious French people who entered into the social life of the town, fresh from "gay Paree," showed the assembled company how the round dance was executed, they looked on with pleased surprise, and as time went by they, too, learned the

art, and the old Virginia reel and the minuette were superannuated.

The girls were as beautiful and charming, and the men were as true and gallant in that distant time as are the girls and young men of today. But all those who lived in the period referred to have long since vanished—their very names, many of them, being forgotten.

They were happy and joyous beneath the self-same sky that bends above the Greensboro of today, but they now rest out under the quiet stars, forgetful of all life's joys and sorrows and disappointments—which will be recorded of you and me in the after-time. But

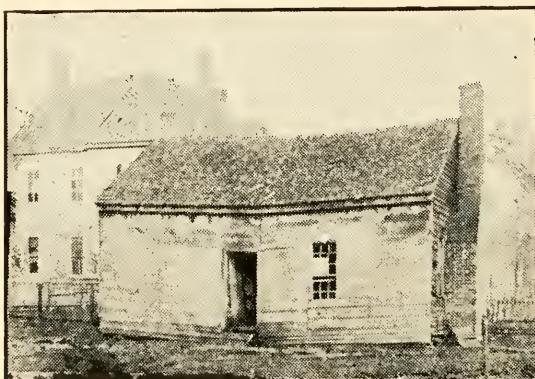
“A hundred years from now, dear heart,  
We'll neither know nor care  
What came of all life's bitterness,  
Or followed love's despair.  
Then fill the glasses up again,  
And kiss me through the rose-leaf rain;  
We'll build one Castle more in Spain,  
And dream one more dream there.”



## Chapter IV

### WEST GREENSBORO.

In 1835, the road from Erie, the then county seat of Greene, made no turn at the N. B. Jones' front gate as now, but continued at an angle in the rear of the Benners' house near the present location of the Pasteur home, went across the Boardman front yard, and then entered Main street.



“THE OLD RED HOUSE.”

Oldest structure in Greensboro. It was erected in the early Twenties.

The Al Stollenwerck old homestead lot extended to the then road; a private dwelling, occupied by Mr. Lowry, known as the “Red House,” so-called from the color it was painted, stood very near the road, so that in looking down Main street, it seemed to block it. This old house is still in existence, and was used for many years by the Stollenwercks as a kitchen. It is yet in the back yard

of the Stollenwerck lot. "The Red House" was regarded as quite a commodious dwelling when it was erected back in the latter part of the twenties. The above is a splendid picture of the old two-room building.

Beyond the Boardman residence was the home of Mrs. Ashe, and further on, as far as Dr. Wm. Jones' plantation, which was located in the rear of the present Hobson homestead, all was a dense forest covered with thick undergrowth. The hollow just east of where W. B. Inge resides, was a very dense thicket, with a rippling stream flowing through it.

### *Hung in Effigy.*

The cutting down of an oak tree and the filling of a well in 1843 in Greensboro came near causing a riot. Much bitter feeling was manifested over the incident. In the exact center of Main street at the intersection of Tuscaloosa street, was a public well covered by a square shelter with a four-sided roof; shading it was a large, thrifty, beautifully shaped oak, beneath the shade of which the inhabitants rested and whiled away the dull, hot summer days. In 1843, the Town Council, after deliberating over the matter, and coming to the conclusion that the well and the beautiful oak were unnecessary obstructions to the highway, had the well filled up and the tree cut down. So great was the indignation of the populace over this act of vandalism (as they regarded it) that the Intendant, who was instrumental in removing the ancient landmarks, was hung in effigy. At the time of the existence of the well referred to, there was another in the center of Main street very near the Greensboro hotel. This well was also filled up. About ten or twelve years ago, this old relic was brought to the attention of the public by a sinking of the soil at this point. The old inhabitants then recalled the watering place of the old days. It is a fact that is not generally known, or

at least not thought of by many, that a wound in the breast of old mother earth never heals if made beneath the top soil. The clay never runs together and forms again a solid strata, but the cut always remains.

On January 27, 1845, an Act was passed to "Alter and amend the several Acts Incorporating the Town of Greensborough." It somewhat enlarged the powers of the Intendant and Council.

On February 12, 1850, another Act to amend the charter was passed, the main feature of which was authorizing the town to build a jail, or calaboose, for the detention of slaves. The building erected is still standing in the rear of the old market house, located on the southern boundary line of the property of Gulley and Christian on Main street. It served as a county prison before the present jail was built, and many are the evil doers who have been detained within the narrow limits of the two little rooms composing the calaboose. It is still in use by the town as a city prison.

As a matter of historical interest we record here that the town of Greensboro presented the county of Hale with the building now used as a jail immediately in the rear of the court house. This was done in accordance with the proposition Greensboro made the county to the effect that it would present the county with a court house and jail if the voters would make the town the county seat. The brick of which the jail is built was burned in 1868 by the town authorities, and it is claimed that considerable money was saved by the operation. Hugh Watt was the contractor.

In 1850, the town erected the building that is now used as the Fire Company's House, as a public market, and all butchers and sellers of fresh meats were required by law to keep their places of business in stalls provided for the purpose. The stalls were rented to the butchers, and quite a neat sum was realized each year by the town from the rentals. The bell in the little tower—now used

as a fire alarm—was rung each morning between four and five o'clock to notify the people of Greensboro that the market was open and ready for business. In those days every one buying beef had to go or send for it, or else they went without.

On January 25, 1856, an Act incorporating the Southern University was passed. Sections 4, 5, and 6 of this Act forbids the sale of liquors within a radius of five miles of Greensboro, except by druggists. Governor Winston vetoed the bill, but the Legislature passed it over his protest.

The exception in regard to druggists selling liquors was soon taken advantage of, and for some years the drug stores sold whiskey without apparent restraint. So flagrantly was the intent of the law violated, that at the session of the Legislature 1884-5, the charter of the University was amended so as to prohibit the sale of liquor by the druggists. For nearly a quarter of a century no liquor has been legally sold in Greensboro. On January 1, 1887, the entire county of Hale became prohibition territory by Legislative enactment.

It was not until the year 1858 that the limits of the town were extended beyond the original quarter section and the Marast lot. Acting under Sections 1220 and 1225 of the then General Statutes of Alabama, a petition was filed in the Probate Court of Greene county, praying that the matter of extending the corporate limits of Greensboro might be submitted to a vote of the qualified electors of said town. The territory designated as an addition was the northeast, the southeast and southwest quarters of Section 16. Considerable opposition to the proposed addition developed, and the election was quite exciting. However, the extensionists won, the vote standing sixty for, and forty-two against extension. The territory annexed came under the jurisdiction of the town authorities in April, 1858.

In 1859, the charter was again amended so as to author-

ize the imprisonment of white persons, and also made the Intendant elective by the people instead of by the Council as before. The office of marshal was also created.

On March 1st, 1870, an Act was approved by the Legislature, by which all former Acts in regard to the Charter of the town of Greensboro were repealed, and the powers granted under the act of 1870, were regarded as the powers to be exercised by those in authority. New ordinances and new by-laws were enacted by the Mayor and Council.

Finally the Legislature at its session of 1894-5 repealed all former Acts and gave the town its present charter. The corporate limits as set forth and defined therein are the same as the limits of today. The following is the territory embraced in the corporation: The West half of the Northwest quarter, the Southwest quarter and the West half of the Southeast quarter of Section 16; the East half and the Southwest quarter of Section 17; the North half of the Northwest quarter, and the Northwest quarter of the Northwest quarter of Section 20, and that part of Section 21 lying north of a line beginning at the Southeast corner of the Southern University grounds and running West to the Section line between Sections 20 and 21, all in Township 20, Range 5, East.



## Chapter V

### GINNING AND MARKETING OF COTTON.

On the lot in the rear of Geo. Findlay's store stood, in 1830, a gin house and screw. The merchants bought cotton in the seed and had it ginned, and the small planters brought in their cotton to have it ginned for toll. The merchants also bought much cotton in bales. Mobile was the market to which it was shipped, and the shipping point was what is now known as old Erie—not a house being left to mark the site of the once flourishing town. The hauling to Erie gave employment to a number of professional white teamsters. The mule teams of these wagoners, as well as the teams of the neighboring planters, were decorated with bells, high up over the hames, bright and glistening, which, besides setting off the beauty of the animals, made the streets musical and lively by their merry jingle.

### *Sport in the Old Days.*

In 1830, on the lot where now stands the handsome three-story Opera House, there was located a wall-like erection of plank supported by braces behind (say 30 feet long by 25 feet high) like one side of a building, for the purpose of ball-play. The name of the game played by the men of that distant period was "Fives," and during the dull summer season, it was a very popular amusement. Base ball was one of the joys which the citizenship of the long ago never knew, and therefore never missed, just as the game of "Fives" is to the present generation.

*School Lands.*

Up to 1832 the public school lands (the 16th section) were rented out, and the proceeds applied to the schools. On January 13th, 1832, they were sold at auction—John M. Bates, Patrick May and Hugh McCann being the commissioners. The plat (which shows the location of the roads at that time) with the names of the purchasers, is recorded in Book E, page 511 Greene county deed records. After the sale, the lands were cultivated by the owners, or rented out. Some of the lots—that for instance on which stands the D. F. McCrary home, and others in close proximity, rented for \$12 per acre per year for growing cotton. The land was rich and produced very fine crops.

*Killing of Dr. Hellen.*

Up to twenty-five or thirty years ago, Greensboro bore an unenviable reputation abroad for being a rowdy, turbulent place,—a place where murders were frequently committed. And it is a fact that there is hardly a corner on the streets of the town where the soil has not been reddened with the life-blood of some human being. There were feuds and fights and killings that would have done credit to a mountain county of Kentucky. But all that passed away a quarter of a century ago, and in all the land there is not to be found a more quiet, refined, peaceable and lawabiding people.

It would require many pages to tell of the awful tragedies that have been enacted on the streets of the town. We shall mention only one of the many occurrences. It happened so far back that there is not a man now living who has personal knowledge of the unfortunate affair, but there are a few who have it from their fathers or mothers.

On December 21, 1833, a special election for justice of

the peace was being held in a store situated on the Steinhart corner. In those days the office was much sought after, and the campaign on this occasion was very warm.

A man named John Street, a lawyer, was a candidate for the position. During the progress of the election, a young physician named Dr. J. S. W. Hellen, became engaged in a quarrel with one of Street's brothers, and blows and a tussle ensued on the sidewalk near the polling place. The fighting men were soon surrounded by a crowd. John Street came to his brother's assistance. Dr. Hellen broke loose from his antagonists, rushed into the store, picked up a couple of scale weights, exclaiming: "Let me get back to the d—n scoundrels!" and as he went out of the door he fell dead on the sidewalk. An examination showed that he had been fatally stabbed.

The Streets were arrested, and either placed under bond or put in jail at Erie. They were indicted by the grand jury for the murder of Hellen. Col. John Erwin, the ablest lawyer in this section, was employed to defend them. Owing to the feeling of the public against the men, a change of venue was granted, and the trial took place in Marengo county. Although there was a large number of witnesses, no one could be found who knew which of the Streets struck the fatal blow, and as they were tried separately, both were acquitted.

At the time of his murder, Dr. Hellen was Worshipful Master of the Masonic Lodge in Greensboro, and was buried with the honors of the Craft on December 22, 1833. The funeral services were held in the Presbyterian Church—then located on the lot immediately in front of the Greensboro Graded School. The funeral sermon was delivered by Rev. John Ives.

Twenty or more years after the occurrence, there came to Greensboro on business a man from North Carolina named Brooks. He met Col. Erwin, the lawyer who had defended the Streets, and in the course of the conversation he remarked that it was his first visit to Greensboro

since Dr. Hellen was killed. The reference at once aroused the interest of Col. Erwin, and he asked him what he knew about the fight, and he said that he saw the entire occurrence from beginning to end, and that he saw the man when he made the fatal stab at Hellen. "The man," continued Brooks, "reached over while the two men were clinched and plunged his knife into Hellen with all his might. He quickly withdrew it from Hellen's body, wiped the blade on the leg of his trousers, and walked off around the corner. He was a tall, slender fellow. The next time I saw him he was standing on the corner (near the present Lichtman store) dressed in an entirely different suit of clothes, but I recognized him as the man who did the killing."

This, declared the lawyer, was the first time that he knew certainly which one of the Streets struck the fatal blow, and from the description of the man given by Brooks he then knew that John Street was the person.



## Chapter VI

### DIVISION OF GREENSBORO IN THE EARLY YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE.

A few years prior to 1830, Greensborough was divided into three imaginary wards, known as "The White Settlement," "The Black Settlement," and "Dogsboro." A diligent search failed to reveal the reason for the names. The reader is left to judge of the appropriateness of each by a description of the various wards.

The boundaries of the White Settlement were from Centreville street on the east to the street immediately east of the Greensboro hotel on the west—in other words, the two blocks east from the hotel. In this Settlement was a two-story frame hotel, painted white, located where the court house now stands. Opposite, was an imposing-looking (for those days) frame house, the residence of Dr. Hunter. The house is yet standing, but has been added to in the rear, and is known as the Gewin hotel. Further on towards the west, on either side of the street, were buildings variously occupied—two dry goods stores, in one of which was the postoffice, a tinner's shop, a tailor's shop, a lawyer's office, a printing office and two dwellings.

From the street east of the Greensboro hotel to Tuscaloosa street on the west was known as the Black Settlement. Within these limits were four or five dry goods stores, two liquor saloons, two lawyers' offices and three dwellings. On the Powers' corner stood a one-story double log cabin, kept as a hotel, its swinging sign a stag. Scarff's cabinet shop and residence stood where the large

two-story brick store stands at the corner of Tuscaloosa and Main Streets—built in 1887 by Capt. S. T. Taylor—by the way, the first brick structure that had been erected in the town long before the civil war. Opposite the Scarff building was a red frame house, a hotel, kept by Maj. A. L. DesCourt, a French refugee, who had served under the first Napoleon, and participated in the battle of Waterloo; further up, on the same side of the street, was a store and a tailor's shop.

Dogsboro extended from Tuscaloosa street on the east to the Stollenwerck old homestead on the west—the western boundary line being the corporate limits of the town. In Dogsboro stood the village blacksmith shop (Coleman W. Garrett, proprietor). It was located near the west corner of the present Methodist church lot, about as far back from the street as the church stands.

The passage of the years and the earnest endeavors of good people work wonderful changes. The progress of civilization is to be noted by the churches and schools along the pathway. Back in the days referred to, when Dogsboro precinct was in its glory, near where stands the Methodist church was a two-story frame store, which was used from 1833 to 1836, at the time of the races, as an open gambling house. It was filled with faro tables and gambling devices of many kinds, and the visitors to the place were numerous, and large sums were lost and won on the result of the races and around the gambling tables. The officers of the law paid no attention to such diversions, and gambling and horse-racing went on undisturbed. This house was occupied for a few years after 1836 by Levin Gayle as a dry goods store. In 1839, the lot was sold to the Methodists of Greensboro, and a church was erected thereon the next year.

#### *Princely Gambling.*

As noted above, gambling in the early days of this sec-

tion was very common and considered quite a respectable occupation, and men of the highest standing, measured by the moral standard of the age, engaged in it and wagered princely fortunes on the turn of a card. To illustrate the reckless daring of those who sat at the gaming table in the days referred to, the following true incident is related:

Some time in the year 1833, there went aboard one of the magnificent steam-boats on the Alabama at Mobile, a young man, (whom we shall call Brown) on his way home at a point higher up the river. He had spent several days in the city transacting business, and was returning with a very large sum of money to be used in the conduct of his business as a merchant. After selecting his state-room and looking to the safety of his baggage, he leisurely strolled about and made the acquaintance of his fellow passengers. He was of good address, handsome and well educated. He found, to his intense disgust, that he was so unfortunate as to have taken passage with quite a large and accomplished set of gamblers. They were going up the river on a "professional tour."

No sooner was the steamer well under way before these gamblers brought forth the implements of their profession. Faro, roulette and various other gambling devices were exhibited to tempt the unwary to risk their money. At first, many of the passengers objected to having the cabin turned into a gambling hell; but the professionals were loud in their claims that they played on the square, and assured those who objected that if one of their number should be caught cheating, the stakes should be forfeited and he put off on the nearest land. After this, no further objection was made, and the numerous games went on without interruption.

By some means the gamblers found out that Brown had a large sum of money with him and they constantly besought him to "try his luck," but he firmly declined all invitations. But one evening after supper, tiring of

their solicitations he yielded, and consented to make one of a party of four who were about to sit down to a game of cards for small stakes.

For a while, no special interest attached to the game,—it seemed tame and uninteresting, and the parties appeared to be evenly matched in point of skill. But as the game progressed, the professionals discovered that Brown was no novice at the card table, for he was able to hold his hand with the best. Larger sums were staked as the hours passed. Two of the professionals, either unable or unwilling to risk such amounts as were being bet withdrew from the game. Brown and one of the gamblers, however, still retained their seats, and with eager faces and shaking hands continued to play. All the "banks" were deserted, and every one in the cabin gathered around the table and in breathless silence watched the game. Fortune was favoring Brown, and he won stake after stake, when the professional, with a fierce oath, dashed down the cards and challenged him to give him his revenge with dice, to which proposition Brown assented.

The dice and cups were produced, and the now thoroughly excited men again bet their money, but not with the same result. Brown was the loser in every throw. He now seemed wild and beside himself with excitement. He doubled every time, until no less than ten thousand dollars lay upon the table to be won or lost on a single throw of the dice. Again the gambler was successful. Brown sprang from his chair, and telling his antagonist to remain where he was, repaired to his state-room and returning in a few minutes, threw upon the table a large roll of bank bills, saying to the gambler:

"You have already won from me over fifteen thousand dollars. The money I have just placed upon the table represents double that amount. I dare you to put up a like sum and let the ownership of the whole be decided by a single cast!"

The gambler, without hesitation, expressed his willingness to do so, but declared that he did not have so much money as that. The deficiency, however, was soon made up by his partners, and the two men prepared to resume the game. Lying near Brown was a large carving fork which the waiter had neglected to take from the table when he had cleared it that evening, and as he resumed his seat he carelessly, and apparently accidentally, drew this fork close to his side.

A breathless silence pervaded the entire room. Men stood aghast at the tremendous nerve of the two players. Sixty thousand dollars to be won or lost on a single throw of the dice!

Brown seized the cup, and shaking the dice violently for a moment, dashed them before him. Those who were in sympathy with him could hardly suppress a cry of exultation as they saw that he had thrown double fives—within one of the highest number it is possible to make.

The professionals cast uneasy glances at each other, but the gambler who was playing with Brown only smiled scornfully, and drew the dice towards him. However, just as he was placing them in the box, they slipped from his fingers and fell upon the floor.

In an instant, he stooped and recovered them, but as he reached forth his hand to take the cup, Brown, whose eyes had a fixed and determined look, and had never for an instant been off him, suddenly seized the fork, and with a movement as quick as that of a rattlesnake, drove the sharp prongs through the wrist of the gambler, literally pinning it to the table, and at the same time presented a cocked pistol full at his head. There was a fearful yell from the wounded man, and a volley of oaths from his companions. Half a dozen weapons were instantly planted at the breast of Brown. He was, however, equal to the occasion. Not a muscle of his face moved, and his voice was as calm and undisturbed as if in ordinary conversation as he said:

"One moment, gentlemen. You yourselves have declared that should one of your number be detected in foul play, that the stakes should be forfeited and he summarily punished. If the dice under the hand I have pinned down on this table are not false, then do with me as you please. If, however, my assertion is correct, I demand the fulfilment of your pledge."

By this time every male passenger on the boat had collected around the table, and the gamblers saw by their looks and drawn pistols that they were not to be trifled with. So they were forced, reluctantly, to admit the truth of Brown's statement.

The gambler was held securely in his chair, the fork withdrawn, and the dice examined. They were found to be loaded. The true pair were concealed up his sleeve. His fate was sealed. In spite of desperate resistance, strong arms stripped him of his weapons, forced him into a boat and rowed him to the nearest land—a low sand bank entirely surrounded by the rapidly rising river. Upon this island, deaf to his piteous appeals, they left him, and the steamer resumed her course up the river.

But long after those on board had lost sight of him, there came to their ears through the black darkness of the night, wild cries and fierce denunciations from the doomed gambler who had been left upon the lonely sand bank, which was soon to be swept by the angry waters of the swollen river.

Brown hid his face in his hands and wept like a child. Strong men turned pale as they heard, above the dash of the ponderous wheels of the steamer and the rush of the waters, the despairing wails of the man of whose fate there could be no doubt,—for the strongest swimmer could not for a moment stem that fearful torrent, and to remain upon the bank was but to choose a lingering and more fearful death.

There was no more gambling on board the boat that night; and at the first landing reached next day most of

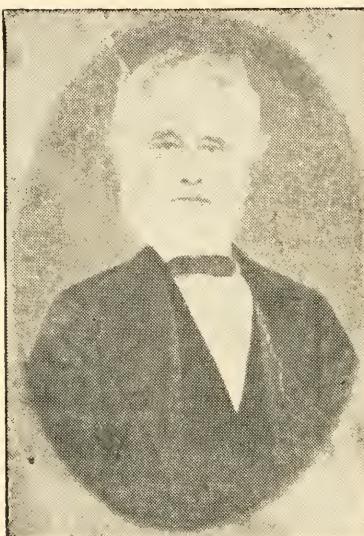
the passengers left her, fleeing as if from some place accursed. Among those who left was Brown.

It would be profitless to follow him further, for the reason that this incident is simply noted in order that the present generation, and that to follow, may have some idea to what extent men went at the card table in the olden days when gambling was considered a proper and respectable occupation.



## Chapter VII

### NEWSPAPERS.



COL. JOHN G. HARVEY,

A Graduate of West Point Military Academy, and who was editor of the Alabama Beacon for fifty-five years.

As early as 1824, and presumably earlier, there was a newspaper published in Greensboro called "The Halcyon," and so far as the record goes, it was the first publication ever issued in the town. It was edited by Thomas Eastin. It was a four column sheet,—dimensions 22 1-2 by 17 1-2 inches. In 1825, Mr Eastin, merged "The Halcyon" into the "Greene County Patriot,"

which was also a small four-page paper, and printed it continuously for several years.

From an issue of "The Halcyon" dated April 24th, 1824, is to be noted an act of Congress for the "better organization of the District Court of the United States for the District of Alabama, approved March 8, 1824, by James Monroe. It also contains an act of the Legislature of Alabama authorizing the Governor and five Commissioners to effect a State loan of \$100,000, by the issuance and sale of State bonds. The proceeds to be used as capital in the State Bank then about to be established.

Israel Pickens was then Governor, and Jas. J. Pleasants Secretary of State.

Among the advertisements in this paper, are the following:

Several lots in Demopolis, advertised by Walter Crenshaw, Joseph B. Earle, Geo. S. Gaines and James Childress, Commissioners.

A town ordinance "to prevent the burning of coal-kilns within the corporate limits" of Greensboro,—signed by E. Clement, Intendant.

A notice by T. C. H. Gantt, Sheriff of Greene County.

"Hitchcock's Alabama Justice of the Peace," for sale by F. & E. Peck.

"Law Notice," by John Erwin.

"New Goods," by D. W. Edgerly & Co.

"Caution," by Theophilus Eddins, and another, of a similar character, by John Stokes.

"Executors' Notice," by Stephen Cook and John Coleman.

"Groceries For Sale," by Franklin Robinson.

Notice of administration on the estate of Stephen Herrin, dec'd., by Thos. C. Gantt, Adm'r.

The following notice of the Mobile cotton market appears: "Prime, 13 1-2c.—Fair, 12@12 1-2c. Inferior, 12 1-2@11-1-2."

"The Halcyon" and "The Patriot" were the first papers

ever printed in the town, and their weekly advent was looked forward to with great interest by subscribers, and others. In those days, and even down to a much later date, there was no personal mention of goings and comings of the citizens, nor any reports of dances, card parties, meetings of Women's Clubs, etc. Indeed, it was the rule with the editors of the olden time to strenuously avoid the mention of the name of a lady in their publications. One of the editors belonging to the old regime—Col. John G. Harvey—told the writer that he thought no lady's name should ever appear in the public print except on two occasions, to-wit: When she married and when she died. And that was the idea entertained on the subject by nearly all the editors of fifty or more years ago. Could they come forth from their graves and take only a hasty glance at the average publication of to-day, they would be shocked beyond measure, and possibly think that we had fallen upon degenerate times.

In July, 1833, The Greene County Sentinel was established in Greensboro by Daniel F. Brown. It was a five column, four page paper, and was well patronized by the citizens of Greene county and of Mobile in the way of advertising. The subscription was three dollars per year, or four dollars if the subscriber waited until the end of the year to pay the bill. We have before us a copy of the Sentinel of December 26, 1835. It contains such names of former residents of the town as Young Bohannan, who offers "A Reward of \$5.00 for the return of a Hound Dog with the end of his tail cut off;" Doctors McCann & Thompson who offer their professional services to the people; William W. Jackson, notifies all persons not to purchase a certain note of hand which he had given B. H. Covington; Dr. Wm. P. Murphy tenders his services to the people of Greensboro and vicinity, and advertises his office "at the residence of Mr. John G. Harvey opposite Mr. Gayle's store;" Webb & Dugger advertise their mercantile business, as do also J. & G. Noble; Wm. Myatt.

Secretary of Lafayette Masonic Lodge, gives notice that there will be a Masonic and citizen's ball given at the Warrior House in Greensboro on the night of December 28th, 1835; Chas. Whelan advertises new and fashionable clothing, and Locke & Lowry, were merchant tailors in Greensboro seventy odd years ago; various tracts of land are offered for sale by John F. Sossaman, W. P. Brown, Wm. B. Lightfoot, George S. Dugger, John Carter, James S. Jones, Wm. F. Monett, James Yeates and others. The following advertisement from the *Sentinel* will prove to be something unusual to the reader of the present generation:

“Public Auction—Will be sold in the Town of Greensborough, on the 8th day of January, 1836, to the highest bidder, 6 Likely Negroes, consisting of two Men, three Women and one Boy; all of which are choice field hands. Terms made known on the day of sale. GULEELMUS WOOD.”

The *Sentinel* passed into the hands of Thomas DeWolf, who retained possession of it for a year or so, and then sold out to one McCormic, and he in turn sold the paper to John B. Rittenhouse. Rittenhouse tired of the newspaper business, and sold the plant to Charles Briggs, and in 1840 left Greensboro and became a Purser in the U. S. Navy. He died in Philadelphia, June 22, 1874, aged 62 years. He was on the retired list of the Navy at the time of his death. During The *Sentinel*’s varied career its name was changed by some one of its owners to The *Alabama Beacon*—subscription \$5.00 per year in advance—under which title Col. John G. Harvey purchased it in 1843 and continued its publication until his death, July 3, 1890, when the paper passed into the hands of Jas. W. Bondurant, who in a year or two sold it to H. G. Benners and Edwin S. Jack. Mr. Benners soon purchased Mr. Jack’s interest, and was from 1893 to 1908 the editor and publisher, but in the latter year he leased it to Geo. K. Keady, and returned to the practice of the law. The career of The *Beacon* has been a long and honorable one,

and is linked with the history of the town for nearly three-quarters of a century.

The Alabama Republican was the name of a paper that was published in Greensboro by Thomas DeWolf in 1839. How long it survived, we do not know, and of its history we could learn nothing.

In the year 1835 there was published in Greensboro a paper called the Beacon Light of Liberty, but as to its history we are in ignorance, nor could we ascertain any facts in regard to it. Back in those days the county officials were not required to keep bound file copies of all newspapers published in the county, as is now the case, and it is a very great pity that such a law was not in force at that time, for the history of the progress or retrogression of any town or city in Alabama might be accurately written by a study of these old papers—for the papers then, as now, largely reflected the life of the communities in which they were published. In reference to the Beacon Light of Liberty, one might naturally suppose that the Alabama Beacon was the outgrowth of this publication, but the facts related above in regard to The Beacon were obtained from Col. John G. Harvey, who owned and edited it so long, and a more accurate and painstaking man in his statement of matters of fact could not be found.

In May, 1830, Jacob I. Cribbs conducted the Greene County Gazette at Erie. If the old saying to the effect that "the good die young" is applicable to newspapers, The Gazette must have been a very proper and well-behaved periodical, for its existence extended over a period of only three years.

In November, 1876, W. C. Garrett established The Southern Watchman in Greensboro, which he conducted for several years, and then sold the plant to Alex H. Williams, who owned and edited it until his death in November, 1885. The paper was then purchased by Wm. E. W. Yerby, the present editor and proprietor of The Greensboro Watchman—Mr. Yerby changing the name

from The Southern Watchman to The Greensboro Watchman—thus giving the paper the distinction and honor of being the first publication ever named for the town of Greensboro.

In 1902, The Greensboro Record Company established the Greensboro Record—Geo. K. Keady and Lee M. Otts editors and publishers. Mr. Keady severed his connection with the Record in the course of a couple of years, and Mr. Otts has continued its publication to the present time.

It will be seen from the foregoing that Greensboro has not at any time been without a newspaper during the past eighty-five years.

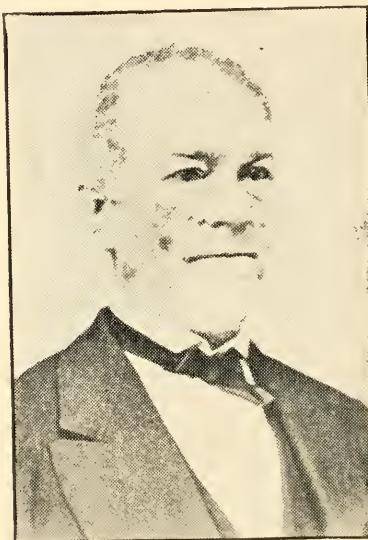
To recapitulate: The list is as follows: The Halcyon, The Greene County Patriot, The Beacon Light of Liberty, The Greene County Sentinel, The Alabama Republican, The Alabama Beacon, The Greensboro Watchman, The Greensboro Record—a total of eight.

The editors of the papers mentioned above have been, during the eighty-five years, as follows: Thomas Eastin, Daniel F. Brown, Thomas DeWolf, Mr. McCormic, John B. Rittenhouse, Charles Briggs, John G. Harvey, W. C. Garrett, Alex H. Williams, Wm. E. W. Yerby, Jas. W. Bondurant, H. G. Benners, Edwin S. Jack, George K. Keady, Lee M. Otts—a total of fifteen.



## Chapter VIII

### THE GREENSBORO GUARDS.



COL. ALLEN C. JONES.

Who was the first Captain of the Greensboro Guards,—and afterwards Colonel of the 5th Alabama Regiment C. S. A.

The following is a complete list of the old Greensboro Guards, Company D, Fifth Alabama Regiment, Confederate States of America. This company, numbering 209, left Greensboro for the war on the first day of May, 1861, and served heroically in the fearful struggle from Bull Run to Appomattox:

## OFFICERS:

Allen C. Jones, Captain.  
 Gid Nelson, First Lieutenant.  
 M. L. Dedman, Second Lieutenant.  
 E. L. Hobson, Third Lieutenant.  
 John F. Christian, First Sergeant.  
 Joe Borden, Second Sergeant.  
 Samuel Cowin, Third Sergeant.  
 J. D. Webb, Jr., Fourth Sergeant.  
 Gid G. Wescott, First Corporal.  
 Jonathan Williams, Second Corporal.  
 E. Pompey Jones, Third Corporal.  
 W. J. McDonald, Fourth Corporal.

## PRIVATEES:

A. H. Moore,	D. J. Briggs,	S. J. Durrough,
Robert Jeffries,	B. A. Butler,	J. J. Wright,
John Madison,	R. A. Chadwick,	S. M. Willingham,
J. P. Moore,	W. W. Long,	Henry Beck,
J. A. Grigg,	Wm. Clifton,	J. C. Orick,
J. M. Brown,	Henry Fowler,	Tom Frierson,
S. V. Webb,	W. F. Bulger,	D. G. Williams,
T. C. Hill,	J. J. Givins,	E. Y. Idom,
C. T. Briggs,	E. T. Hutchinson,	A. A. Sledge,
R. S. McCall,	M. H. Jones,	Will McCrary,
J. W. Wynne,	G. W. Layne,	Wm. Elliott,
R. B. Price,	James Pickens,	Lige Lawrence,
Gilliam James,	J. C. Ray,	H. T. Hollen,
W. A. Lanier,	J. Renki,	Louis Elias,
W. A. McCall,	R. H. Simonds,	W. J. Madison,
B. A. Carter,	Robert Avery,	C. C. Sheldon,
W. J. Jones,	H. C. Stephenson,	A. G. Ward,
A. B. Chapman,	R. H. Trawick,	Wm. Ellison,
Robert Lanier,	Ed Nutting,	J. C. Morris,
D. T. Webster,	T. F. Ward,	J. H. Bayol,
Carter Adams,	J. L. Youngblood,	W. W. McNeil,
Joe Sample,	A. C. Waddell,	W. J. A. Little,
W. C. Tunstall,	J. W. Parker,	L. S. Bostick,
W. G. Britton	W. Y. Idom,	James McGee,
J. W. Crowell,	Max Marxtine,	B. H. Sheron,
P. H. Lavender,	W. B. Moorman	R. Moore,
J. W. Locke,	C. Badenhausen,	Henry Christian,
W. T. Jackson,	R. H. Adams,	J. W. Clements,
W. A. Simms,	G. T. Price,	J. W. Parrish,
W. D. Miller,	Robt. Paulding,	John Wells,
T. B. Rowland,	Peter Huggins,	Buck Adams,
W. R. Hooper,	E. T. Pasteur,	Jack Craddock,

J. E. Webb,	M. S. Ramsey,	Lee Whelan,
T. G. Moore,	H. G. Geddie,	W. S. Cowin,
B. F. Sadler,	F. A. Borden,	H. M. Chadwick,
E. T. Martin,	John Warren,	J. K. Elliott,
Jas. M. Jack,	S. B. Jackson,	Wm. N. Knight,
J. L. Wright,	F. S. Huggins,	Tink Kennedy,
W. G. Hafner,	W. L. Kennedy,	L. M. Wildey,
W. N. Glover,	W. S. Duffie,	J. C. McNeil,
S. W. Chadwick,	George Nutting,	J. H. Lee,
D. E. Bailey,	C. James,	C. L. Williams,
Jas. Burton,	J. D. Webb, Jr.	N. B. Jones,
D. L. Carroll,	R. H. Hardaway,	W. R. Thomas,
H. R. Childress,	Tom Perren,	W. H. Allen,
J. W. Chiles,	G. W. Holston,	J. T. Knowlen,
J. A. Farrior,	John Carberry,	F. E. Bayol,
W. H. Willingham,	John Sample,	A. R. Morris,
A. J. Geislin,	B. McCrary,	W. R. Quarles,
C. J. Hausman,	W. C. Croom,	Dud Logan,
A. Jackson,	J. A. Hester,	Stan Jawicki,
Sam Wright,	W. W. Borden,	J. M. Martin,
Sam Pickens,	A. G. Coleman,	Sam Wright,
W. M. Pope,	John Adams,	W. B. Haden,
J. C. Roberts,	J. M. Johnson,	Ezra Foster,
Thomas Rhodes,	J. E. Wheeler,	J. W. Sanders,
R. H. Pickering,	L. P. Wall,	C. E. Owens,
D. H. Sellers,	G. W. Wilson,	T. W. Walthall,
Wm. Stokes,	J. L. Boardman,	Coal Hargrove,
J. S. Tucker,	J. C. McDermaide,	Sterling Speed,
L. Ullman,	J. E. Griggs,	Wm. Tinker,
J. B. Youngblood,	L. D. Southworth,	Wm. Seldon,
W. D. Woodruff,	J. N. C. Herran,	J. E. Wilson,
J. P. Arrington,	J. F. Jackson,	C. A. Sheldon,
W. D. Witherspoon,	W. H. Sheldon,	Charles Hafner.
D. Barnum,	J. H. Cowin,	

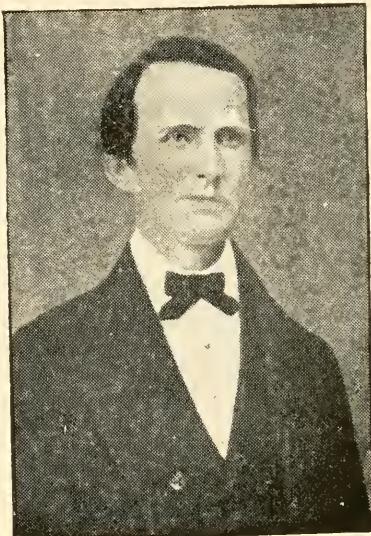
Total membership—209.

Allen C. Jones of this company rose to the rank of Colonel of the 5th Alabama Regiment. The Confederate Veterans' Camp of Greensboro is named in his honor. This Camp was organized May 25, 1889. Col. Jones died at his home in Greensboro on January 9, 1894, at the age of 82 years.

The following is a list of Confederate officers who served during the war whose residence was in Greensboro and Hale county:

Col. A. C. Jones, 5th Alabama Infantry; Col. Sydenham Moore, 11th Alabama Infantry; Col. Lemuel Hatch, 8th Alabama Cavalry; Col. E. L. Hobson, 5th Alabama

Infantry; Maj. James D. Webb, 51st Alabama Cavalry; Maj. D. T. Webster, 5th Alabama; Maj. John G. Harris, 20th Alabama; Capt. Wm. N. Knight, 20th Alabama; Capt. Noah H. Gewin, 20th Alabama; Capt. A. M. Avery, 20th Alabama; Capt. James A. Wemyss, 36th Alabama; Capt. J. W. A. Wright, 36th Alabama; Capt. John H. Turpin, 28th Alabama; Capt. F. M. Moore, Lieutenants H. C. Childress, J. M. Dedman, John F. Christian, E. P.



COL. SYDENHAM MOORE.

He was Colonel of the 11th Alabama Regiment. Born May 25, 1817, and died in Richmond, Va. August 30, 1862, from the wounds received in the Battle of Seven Pines. He was the father of Mrs. Harris T. Waller, of Greensboro, Ala., and also of Rittenhouse Moore, of Mobile.

Jones, B. S. Evans, Dan H. Britton, A. H. Hutchinson, Gideon E. Nelson, W. C. Tunstall, Thomas J. Hatch, Joe Borden; Thomas A. Hatch, adj't 36th Alabama.

In 1864, when the Confederacy was in desperate straits for soldiers, Wm. H. King of Marion, recruited

a company of boys between the ages of 16 and 18 years in the counties of Hale, Greene and Perry. Those who went from Greensboro and Hale county were:

#### OFFICERS:

Wm. H. King, Captain.  
Blaney Brand, First Lieutenant.  
James Tunstall, Second Lieutenant.  
Syd Woods, Third Lieutenant.  
Thomas Seay, First Sergeant.  
Thomas J. Happel, Second Sergeant.  
Aaron Lawson, Third Sergeant.  
Henry Boardman, Fourth Sergeant.  
E. A. Powers, First Corporal.  
Russell Lawless, Second Corporal.  
Dave Perry, Third Corporal.  
Joe Davis, Fourth Corporal.

#### PRIVATE:

Warren E. Kennedy,	Marion Wilburn,	Wilkins W. Sims,
Frank E. Robinson,	Garland Phipps,	Charles W. Johnson,
William Tidmore,	Lon Ramey,	William Chapman,
J. N. Chapman,	Cap. Stevens,	H. H. Johnson,
Peyton McDonald,	Fred Latner,	John Owens,
James Terry,	Joe Grimes,	James Clements,
William Stewart,	Lum Sims,	Jake Johnson,
William H. Sims,	Sam Lee,	William Tingle,
Henry Stevens,	A. J. Miller,	Tom Smith,
	Enoch Herren,	Tom Herren.

This company left Greensboro in June, 1864, and joined Lockhart's Battalion at Selma. Later, after seeing actual service at Chehaw, they were organized into the 62nd Regiment, Infantry, Daniel Huger of Mobile, Colonel. Fort Gaines surrendered to the Federals in August, 1864, and the boys were made prisoners of war and sent to New Orleans, where they remained until November of the same year, and were then sent to Ship Island, where they remained until January, 1865, when they were exchanged and joined their old command at Mobile.

These gallant companies made a record during the war between the States of which their native town and county are justly proud. Many of the soldiers fell on the battle field, and the great majority of those who returned to their homes have died during the intervening period of nearly half a century.

Their hopes and spirits were high when they left for the front, carrying with them the blessings and prayers of loved ones and friends. They felt that they were going out to fame and triumph, and left with joy and gladness to serve their native land. But their going forth and the return of those who were spared from the shot and shell of battle and the ravages of disease, was in great contrast.

“Going out with hopes of glory, coming in with  
sorrows dark;  
Going out with banners flying, coming in with  
mastless bark.”

But they returned not to sit idly down and lament over their great misfortunes, but went heroically to work to retrieve their fallen fortunes and to meet the changed conditions that had come to the land they loved so well.

#### *The Women of the Confederacy.*

And through it all—through the four years of bitter warfare—who was it that aided them most faithfully and loyally? Who was it that really bore the larger share of sorrow and suffering incident upon the cruel strife? Was it not the fair and beautiful women of the Southland?

They were loyally true to the cause of their country, and thought no sacrifice too great for them to make for the men and boys who were at the front fighting for their homes and loved ones.

As illustrative of the spirit of the Southern women

during the dark period of war, the following letter to the Greensboro Beacon of April 25th, 1862, and signed "A Rebel Daughter of Alabama," is copied:

"Greensboro, Alabama, April 22d, 1862.

"Col Harvey: Whilst our fathers, brothers and friends contend on the gory fields for the rights of freemen, we would gladly assist in every way within the sphere of woman's influence. Willingly will we deny ourselves the luxuries of life—aye, even the bare necessities—and count us happy to be able to aid them in the glorious cause of our country's independence. We claim a share in the lives of our brave countrymen; they are fighting for our common rights—we with willing hearts, if feeble hands, are engaged in the soul-inspiring cause. We expect not, nor do we wish a voice in the councils of our nation; ours is not the ambition that would grasp the sword and take our places in the serried ranks of the battle field; we would only labor that our soldiers lack nothing that can be provided, and pray that our faith in the God of Battles may be undiminished in the hour of adversity.

(Signed)                    "A REBEL DAUGHTER OF ALABAMA."

This was the spirit that animated the women of the South and gave faith and courage to the men at the front.

The women of the South toiled unceasingly for the soldier boys; they nursed them in sickness, wept when they died, and even down to this distant day they scatter choicest flowers on their graves with each recurring springtime; they begged for them; they sewed and knitted for them; they suffered, uncomplainingly, hardships, losses and privations; they wore "homespun" dresses; they made their own hats from palmetto; they made their own shoes, and knitted their own gloves and stockings; they drank coffee made of wheat, okra or parched sweet potatoes, and tea made of raspberry leaves. They cared for the children and slaves, and in many instances superintended the plantations.

And such women as these have been called indolent and self-indulgent, incapable of meeting the hard, stern realities of the world! In the annals of the past there will not be found a record of more helpful, energetic,

courageous, self-reliant women than those of the South in the dark and gloomy days of adversity.

While their hopes and endeavors were in vain, yet they had the proud satisfaction of knowing that they had discharged their duty faithfully, and that their endeavors were in the interest of the cause of which Earl Derby wrote:

"No nation rose so white and fair,  
None fell so free of crime."

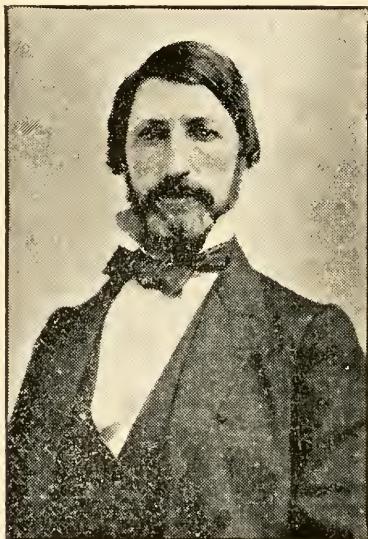
*Mexican War Veterans.*

In 1846 the United States and Mexico got into a dispute about the boundary line of Texas—Texas claiming the Rio Grande as the southwestern limit of her boundary, and Mexico contending that the line was the Nueces. A two years' war was the result of the disagreement, at the end of which period Mexico was whipped and signed a treaty of peace, in which she ceded all the land claimed by Texas, and also the territory comprising New Mexico, Arizona and California—for the latter territory the United States generously paid Mexico sixteen and a half million dollars.

There were a number of Greensboro people who took part in what is known as the "Mexican War." Captain Andrew L. Pickens organized a company of volunteers in Hale county, the company being composed of 108 members. It left Greensboro for the war on the 27th day of May, 1846. Those who joined the Greensboro "Independent Volunteers" in the town were: John L. Croom, E. B. Boast, B. F. Croom, E. A. Wemyss, Jesse J. Melton, P. E. Wolfe, G. A. Dew, John B. Hardaway, Chas. H. Foster, H. Kotch, P. Moss, Christopher Owen, Rich Haynie, H. Williamson, Jas. S. Simmons, Jas. M. Smith, J. W. Hawkins, S. Wm. Morris, J. L. May, John Marshall, W. A. Bell, S. H. W. Inge, Nat M. Murphy, John Witherspoon, Wm. P. Evans, G. W. Briggs, W. Thomp-

son, Powell McDonald, James N. Wood, F. M. Harriss, A. Evans, Wm. H. Fowler, J. R. Capell, Richard Croom, S. P. DuBois, D. M. Barkley, Andrew J. Briggs, Thos. H. Cowin, Archelaus A. Cochran, Taylor McDonald, Jas. J. Jetter; Edward H. Toney, F. B. Moss, David Turner, Jr., John S. Rhodes, Jerry Seale, John Fink.

John L. Croom and Jesse J. Melton, so far as can be learned, are the only surviving members of this company—sixty-two years after its organization.



COL. JAMES D. WEBB,

Who was Colonel of the 51st Alabama Regiment of cavalry. He was killed in battle at Shelbyville, Tenn., July 19, 1863. He is buried in Winchester, Tenn. Just prior to his death he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General, but did not live to receive his commission. He was for a number of years a prominent lawyer in Greensboro.

## Chapter IX

### A THRILLING INCIDENT OF THE RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD.

Those were troublous times in the Southern country directly after the close of the war between the States. While the South was not treated altogether as a subjugated province—that is to say, to the extent of the lands being confiscated by the victors, yet they deemed it necessary to send thousands upon thousands of armed troops to the various towns and cities, whose duty it was to maintain general supervision of the affairs of the country. Occasionally one will meet a Northerner who has come to the conclusion in his own mind that in reality the South was treated very leniently by his section, and he will point with pride to the fact that the people of the South were allowed to retain their lands and houses and personal property of various kinds, in contradistinction from the hitherto rule of war which dictated the taking possession of everything in the conquered territory, and the proceeds made to swell the coffers of the victors. But nevertheless, it is a historical fact that the policy pursued by the United States government during the period of Reconstruction came very near completely wrecking all that was left in the South after the four years of war.

But these remarks are simply made for the purpose of leading up to an incident full of thrilling and dramatic interest that transpired in Greensboro in 1865. At that time there were three companies, containing three hundred soldiers, camped in the town, with the object of keeping “order,” and seeing to it that affairs

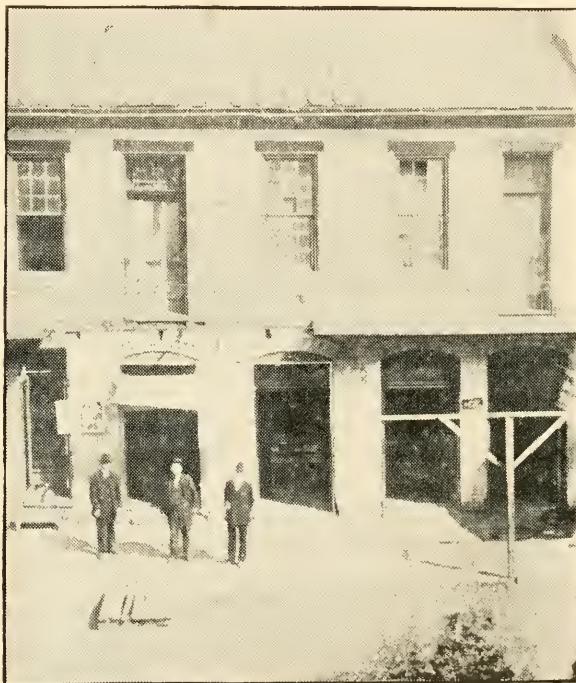
were conducted as the general government at Washington thought they should be.

On the morning of August 31st, 1865, three Federal soldiers from this camp were seen strolling leisurely up the Main street of Greensboro. When they came to the general merchandise store of Robert B. Waller, Jr.—located two doors west of the present Masonic Hall building—they entered, and called for some fruit, which was passed over to them. They stood around chatting with each other and eating the fruit, and when they were about to leave the store, Mr. Waller asked for the price of their purchase, which they refused to pay, and with an oath left the store and continued on up the street. The merchant felt outraged over the treatment, and upon going to the door he saw the Captain of the Company to which the men belonged standing in front of the Tunstall building, and he immediately went to him and reported the conduct of his men. The Captain asked Waller to point the offenders out to him, which he did. He called them to him, and demanded, in a most positive manner, that they pay for the goods at once; and he further informed them that if he ever heard of their being guilty of like conduct he would have them tied up by their thumbs.

The soldiers paid the money rather reluctantly, looked very sullen, but said nothing. Dismissing the matter from his mind, Mr. Waller returned to his store and began to wait on customers who had come in during his absence.

Sitting in front of the store, enjoying the bright sunshine, was Robert Jeffries, and in his lap was seated W. S. (Tood) Cowin, a young man who had seen much service in the Confederate army. After consulting together up the street the three soldiers, who had been made to pay the debt they owed Waller, came back to the store, and without a word of warning one of the men, Jos. Adams, of Co. H, 11th Missouri Infantry, struck

Cowin a most vicious blow in the face with a slung shot—mistaking him (it is supposed) for the merchant who had reported the men to the Captain. Writhing with pain from the sudden and unexpected blow, and with the gleam of a tiger in his eyes, Cowin sprang from his seat, drew his pistol and fired on his assailant, but miss-



#### BUILDING IN FRONT OF WHICH DIFFICULTY BEGAN.

“Tood” Cowin was sitting near the large door to the left when struck by Federal soldier.

ed him. Adams retreated hastily across the street towards Stollenwerck's drug store, and as he retreated he looked back to watch Cowin. When he had nearly reached the opposite sidewalk, Cowin steadied his pistol

by laying it across his left arm, took deliberate aim and remarked, "Now d - - - n you, I'll get you," pulled the trigger and sent a ball crashing through the brain of Adams, who fell dead in his tracks.

When Cowin fired the first shot and missed his man, another of the Federal soldiers, S. Bryant of Co. D, 11th Missouri Regiment, who was standing near, quickly pulled his pistol and was in the act of shooting him at close range, when Tom Cowin, a brother of "Tood" shot Bryant down before he could get his pistol in position. The ball entered his side, and he fell in the gutter. The wound, while quite severe, did not prove fatal.

The pistol shots soon attracted a large crowd to the street, and in a short while the soldiers began to pour into the town from the camp, which was located in the rear of the residence of Col. George Erwin. They raged and swore and were beside themselves with anger when they learned what had transpired, and demanded, in their frenzy, to be shown the man who had killed their comrade. Cowin saw the storm gathering and walked off down the street, but before he had gone a great many steps he was recognized by some Federals who had witnessed the difficulty, and a number of the soldiers made for him, but Cowin faced them and kept them at bay by presenting the ugly looking weapon with which he had killed the man who was lying in the street a short distance away. When he had walked sidewise to Powers' store, keeping the men back with the presented pistol, he noticed a horse hitched in front of the store—a magnificent animal that had been ridden into town that morning by some one from Gen. Cocke's plantation, to whom the horse belonged. She was a thoroughbred racer, and many times had come down the home-stretch a winner on the race-track. Now fully realizing his great danger, Cowin sprang from the sidewalk, cut the bridle reins, leaped into the saddle and clapped his heels into the sides of the splendid charger. With a snort of fright

at the unexpected treatment, she reared and then bounded away as if on the wings of the wind, while the air resounded with the angry shouts of the soldiers calling to those past whom the horse and rider were sweeping, to "stop him! Stop him!"

Seeing that the man they most desired to capture was about to elude their grasp, half a dozen or more soldiers quickly secured horses and started in pursuit at break-neck speed. On and on sped the thoroughbred racer. She was in her element, and seemed to enjoy the wild dash down the public highway. And wildly and furiously also rode the pursuers. But only once or twice did they catch even a glimpse of horse and rider as they sped down some long, straight stretch of road, and then the crack of their pistols rang out on the air—but only with the effect of causing the noble racer to quicken her pace just a little. When about six miles out of town—to the westward—Cowin checked his horse and looked around to see if he could catch a glimpse of his pursuers, but no trace of them could be discovered. He then left the main road, and went into a thicket on a hill overlooking the surrounding country. From this position, a short while afterwards, he saw his pursuers, with horses under whip and spur, pass on down the road, and also saw them when on their return from their fruitless effort to capture or kill him. The next day, Cowin was in Mississippi.

Pandemonium reigned on the streets of Greensboro. Tom Cowin, who had wounded the soldier who had undertaken to shoot his brother, passed rapidly through Waller's store—the doors being shut behind him by some one within—went into the back yard and came out to Main street near Powers' store. He was recognized by the Federals, and was immediately taken in charge by an angry mob, who swore they would hang him at once.

A proposition was submitted that if they would wait until sundown, an effort would be made to have his brother "Tood" come in and give himself up, which proposition

was agreed to; but the half dozen soldiers who had returned from the pursuit had but little hope that he would ever be overtaken, for they reported that they had ridden hard and furiously after him, but to no avail—that all traces of him were lost.

Then Captain Kelley stepped to where the dead soldier was lying in the street, placed his sword across the body, and with a terrible oath swore that if the man who had slain his comrade was not delivered up to the soldiers by the going down of the sun, then, by all the gods, he purposed to hang Tom Cowin, and burn and sack the town.

Squads of soldiers were deputized to go to every house in Greensboro and take therefrom all weapons, and to disarm all the citizens. Realizing the extreme gravity of the situation, and that the town was entirely at the mercy of the frenzied Federals, some of the citizens slipped a runner out of town on a fleet horse to Marion, Ala., where the colonel of the regiment (Lieut.-Col. Green), was stationed at that time.

While awaiting the delivery of "Tood" Cowin to them by the citizens, the soldiers broke open Waller's store, where the difficulty began, and threw all the goods into the street. As the hours passed by the soldiers drank more freely of whiskey, grew more turbulent, and it seemed to those who had sent the messenger to Marion that he would never return. Minutes seemed hours.

The sun began to sink in the west, and still the man the soldiers so much desired to get into their possession did not appear. They placed a rope around Tom Cowin's neck led him in front of the hotel—which his father kept—threw one end over a sign board, and stood facing the west, watching for the going down of the sun. Cowin's father stood by and urged him to die like a man, and he replied that he proposed to do so. Not a tremor passed over him, and not a trace of fear could be dis-

cerned in his face as he looked defiance at those who had him at their mercy.

When hope had gone, and the citizens thought the very worst would happen, the sound of horses' feet was heard, and looking eastward, they saw approaching at breakneck speed, two horses with distended nostrils and flecked with foam, drawing a buggy in which were two men—one of them proving to be the Colonel of the Regiment. Hastily alighting from the vehicle, he pushed his way into the midst of the vast crowd of angry, turbulent soldiers, and went to where Cowin was standing with the rope around his neck. With fire in his eye, and anger in his tone, he demanded of the Captain what he meant by allowing those under his command to be guilty of such conduct. The Captain related the circumstances of the killing of one soldier and the wounding of another by the Cowins, and said he thought he was justifiable. The Colonel replied that it was contrary to military law to hang a man without giving him the benefit of a court-martial, and that he might consider himself under arrest.

Turning to the troops, he ordered them to fall into ranks. Some of them began to murmur disapproval. The Colonel stepped into the street, drew his pistol, and again commanded them in a loud voice to "fall in," and swore that the first man who refused to obey the command would be shot dead in his tracks. This seemed to restore their reason; they fell into ranks and were marched back to camp.

The rope was removed from Tom Cowin's neck and he was also taken to the camp, where he was held as a prisoner. Frank Peterson (Dr. Francis M. Peterson, former President of the Girls' Industrial School at Montevallo, who died March 21, 1908) went out to the camp and was permitted to spend the night with his friend. The next day, Cowin was taken to Tuscaloosa under heavy guard, and placed in prison, to await trial for

shooting the federal soldier (from which he subsequently escaped.)

There is a bit of romance connected with his escape from prison, which shows the devotion of the Southern woman to the Confederate soldier. A beautiful young lady, who was a staunch friend of Cowin's, set herself to work to liberate him.

She was very pretty and most charming and fascinating in her manners. The young lieutenant, who was in charge of the prisoners, fell in love with this sweet Southern girl, and as the two strolled about the streets of classic old Tuscaloosa, or watched the placid flow of the river hard by the city, she would plead with him earnestly to allow Cowin, the friend of her childhood, to escape from prison. For days and days, and time and again the young officer refused to grant the petition—stating that his honor and his position would not permit him to do so. Finally the young lady told him that she would never consent to marry him until her friend was a free man, and reinforced the statement by telling the officer never to see her again. A short time after this, Cowin was missing from prison. How he escaped or whither he went, no one knew.

It would be a pleasing close to this bit of romance to be able to state that the young lady married the young officer—or at least that she married her friend for whom she pleaded—but the truth of history requires it to be said that she did neither, but in the after years married another man.

Neither of the Cowins was ever captured by the Federal officers. As the years passed on, and affairs quieted down, both of them returned to Greensboro, and resided here for quite a while—"Tood" Cowin died in the town a few years after the killing of the soldier; and Tom Cowin, after keeping the Greensboro Hotel for some time, went to Birmingham, where he kept a hotel. From there he went to Anniston, where he died June 27, 1890.

Both the men were Confederate soldiers, and were brave and courageous at all times. They are buried in the Greensboro cemetery.

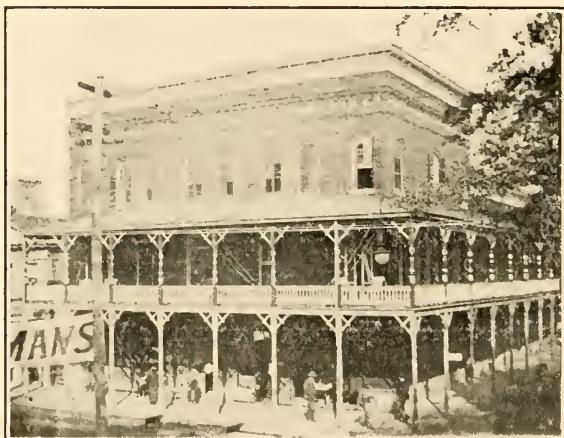
It was never known certainly what influence was used to secure the safety of the Cowins after they had shot the soldiers, as related above, but it developed, in the course of time, that their father, who was quite well-to-do at the time of the trouble, had parted with nearly all his worldly possessions—and it was whispered about that he had let somebody have in the neighborhood of twenty thousand dollars—possibly in the nature of a loan.

As the last words of this bit of tragic history are penned, we pause for a few moments and look out upon the streets where, nearly half century ago, men were crazed, and, in their fearful passion, raged and surged like the mighty waves when the wind is at war with the ocean. But a far different scene from that presents itself to view. True, there stands the self-same building in which the awful tragedy begun; and there, too, stands the self-same hotel before which the angry soldiers stood with halter around the neck of their intended victim, watching for the going down of the sun; the same blue sky bends above, and the same sun they watched has continued to make his rounds through all the many days that have gone to swell the mighty volume of the past since that far-off time.

But no discordant note is heard—no soldiers' tread, no clang of arms nor shrill note of bugle call. Only a scene of beauty and quiet activity greets the gaze. The trees are just awakening from their long winter's sleep and are putting on their garb of green; the birds make merry in the boughs, heedless of the ebb and flow of the human tide beneath; men go about their business, or stand here and there in groups and chat pleasantly together; bevies of beautiful girls, with smiling faces and queenly step, pass up and down the streets where once tumult and

riot reigned supreme; while childhood's merry peals of laughter come in at the open window.

And then it is that we fully realize that a new generation has appeared upon the stage of action—a generation that is the successor to the noblest and truest of which the South can boast in all its glorious history—one whose deeds of valor and patriotism will live in song and story for ages yet unborn. And with the ushering in of the present generation, sectional strife and bitterness have passed away. It is a generation (while doubting the wisdom of the course pursued by the authorities at Washington in their treatment of the Southern people during those half dozen dark and gloomy years immediately succeeding the close of the war) who rejoice in a re-united country, and would seal its devotion to the Stars and Stripes by defending the honor of the Flag on the battlefield; yet, it is a generation that looks with pride and approval upon the conduct of their forefathers in their noble defence of the Stars and Bars, and a generation that will ever treasure that conduct as the richest heritage to which it has fallen heir.



THE GREENSBORO HOTEL.

(Property of J. A. Blunt.)

*The Ku Klux Klan.*

During reconstruction times in Greensboro, and in fact, throughout the South, what was known as the Loyal League was organized by Northern adventurers who came, like a swarm of vultures, to prey upon what was left in this section from the wreck of the war. The object of this league was to enlist all negroes in an oath-bound society pledging them to support the Radical candidates for office and the measures they advocated. Soon the affairs of government passed out of the hands of those who by right should have filled the offices, and under the administration of these unscrupulous men, who had been elevated to position by the votes of the ignorant and vicious negroes, who had been released from slavery only a short while, life in Greensboro and the South generally became almost unbearable. Some answer, it was realized, must be given the Loyal League, and it was found in the Ku Klux Klan. This order was composed of the native white men of the South—many of whom, in fact most of them, had served in the Confederate army. They were a determined body, and resolved to rid the country of the objectionable characters that had flocked in by the score with the hope of adding gain to their worldly wealth. They, too, had an oathbound society, and to this good day, (forty years after) the secrets of the Ku Klux Klan have not been told. They are known to a few survivors of the brotherhood, but they rarely discuss the matter with anyone. These men had the good of their country at heart, and only disciplined those characters who fermented strife between the races, and endangered the safety of the community. Their mission was not murder, as has been charged by those who came, possibly, under the ban of their displeasure, but was corrective in its nature. They would take a man out—it mattered not whether he was white or black—and give him a sound thrashing, and order him to mend his conduct.

The lesson was generally heeded, and but little trouble ever came from anyone who had been waited upon by members of this Klan.

There surrounded the Ku Klux that atmosphere of mystery that is ever appalling to humanity. They always arrayed themselves in a peculiar garb, consisting of a white robe, and covered their faces with a white mask. Their horses were blanketed in white, and as they silently rode through the street or down some lonely road at the dead of night, the evil-doers trembled with fear. It was seldom that an order was ever issued, or a word spoken. Those who had the real interest of their respective communities at heart hailed the presence of the Ku Klux with joy, while the ignorant and vicious, who cared not for the welfare of the town or country, stood in awe and dread.

The Ku Klux first made their appearance in Greensboro in March, 1868, and their presence was made known by hand bills that were posted up at various places on the streets. The following was the

#### KU KLUX KLAN ORDER.

K. K. K.

BLOODY MONTH,  
CLOUDY MOON—LAST HOUR,

Special Order No. 92—Shrouded Brotherhood of  
Hale Division, No. 314.

The Great Past High Giant commands you. The dark and dismal hour will soon be here. SOME LIVE TO-DAY, TO-MORROW DIE. BE YE READY! The whetted sword, the bullet red—and right are ours. Be vigilant and firm. Dare not wear the holy garb of our mystic brotherhood save in quest of BLOOD. Mark well our friends. Let the guilty beware. Everywhere our brotherhood appears. Traitors, beware!

II. Burst your cerement asunder! Meet at the den! “The glow of the worm shows the motion to be near.” Silence! Watchfulness! Patience! Faithfulness! The guilty SHALL BE punished!

By order of  
Samivel, N. S.

Great Grand Cyclops,  
O. E. T.

Headquarters Cyclops Circle, Spirit Cove, March 15, '68.  
Grand Cyclops, Hale County, Ala.:

Sprinkle ye the tombs with Blood! Brothers of the shroud take  
heed, and enforce ye these orders. BLOOD! BLOOD! BLOOD! RE-  
VENGE! REVENGE! REVENGE! Let the guilty beware, the day  
of retribution is at hand—BLOOD is our motto! Look wild  
Shrouds of Hale and enforce all these orders.

(A. M. U.) Grand Cyclops. K. K. K. Life Extinguishers.

Notices of like character appeared in nearly all the towns of Alabama, and it was not long before the military authorities of the United States undertook to crush the Klan. Stringent orders were issued from the headquarters at Montgomery, declaring that "outrages against life, the peace and good order of the community" were being perpetrated by a "band disguised with masks and styling itself the Ku Klux Klan," and constituted a public evil. The sheriffs, mayors, marshals, magistrates, constables, chiefs of police, and police, the order declared, would be held responsible for the suppression of the organization, and the apprehension of its members wherever found. All placards and newspaper cards of the Ku Klux Klan were placed under the ban, and dire punishment was threatened all who failed to aid the military authorities in disbanding the Ku Klux. The order issuing from Montgomery on April 4, 1868, was signed by O. L. Shepherd, Colonel and Brevet Brigadier General, and W. T. Hartz, Brevet Major, U. S. A.

One would naturally suppose that such an order, backed by all the power of the United States government, would have had the effect of causing the Ku Klux to immediately disband, but such was not the case. Conditions were such in this section during the reconstruction period that the men composing the organization had rather have died than to have sit idly down and passively endured them without a protest. The Klan continued to exist for several years after the issuance of the strenuous orders, in nearly all the Southern States.

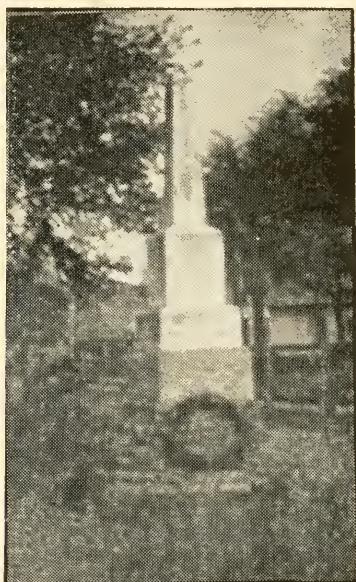
While much of evil is charged to the account of the Ku

Klux Klan as a whole, there is no doubt that the branch organization that existed in Greensboro accomplished much good in the matter of bringing about a more durable condition of affairs in Greensboro and Hale county. It filled its mission, and quietly passed out of existence.



## Chapter X

### CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS.



THE OLD CONFEDERATE MONUMENT.

Erected in 1872 in the Greensboro Cemetery.

After several years of agitation and earnest work, the citizens of Greensboro raised a sufficient amount to purchase a modest monument, and erected it in the Greensboro cemetery to the memory of the Confederate soldiers. The work was completed in March, 1872, and the treasurer, Mr. Charles E. Waller, reported the total cost of the monument, including erection, to be \$204.50. On

the 26th of the following April, the monument was duly dedicated. The following account of the proceedings was written for *The Beacon* by the late Col. Harvey, then editor of that paper:

"Pursuant to a custom which has been observed for five or six years, Friday, the 26th of April, was observed by the citizens of Greensboro as the day for decorating the graves of those Confederate soldiers whose remains were interred in our cemetery.

"A procession was formed at the Presbyterian church, about 4 p. m., composed of the Sunday School scholars of the different churches, the Greensboro Brass Band, and Fire Company, and the citizens of the place generally, in the following order:

*Greensboro Brass Band.*

*Greensboro Fire Company, with Banner.*

*Orator, with Committee of Citizens.*

*Presbyterian Sunday School.*

*Methodist Sunday School.*

*Episcopal Sunday School.*

*Citizens on Foot.*

*Carriages with Citizens.*

"Col. Allen C. Jones, as Marshal of the occasion, marched the procession through Main street to the cemetery, where a stand had been erected for the speaker and where a large crowd had collected in advance of the procession.

"The ceremonies of the occasion were opened with prayer, by the Rev. R. H. Cobbs—after which, Col. Jones introduced John T. Walker, Esqr., as the orator.

"Mr. Walker's address was highly appropriate, chaste, beautiful and eloquent.

"Through the praiseworthy efforts of a few of our citizens—prominent among whom are Dr. Jas. D. Osborn, Chas. E. Waller, Esqr., Mrs. Dr. Ward, Miss Julia Tutwiler and Miss Mary Jackson—a handsome marble monument has been erected in the Greensboro cemetery, having inscribed upon it the names of those Confederate soldiers, from this place or vicinity who lost their lives in battling for the "Lost Cause"—so dear to them and to those who now revere and honor their memories. The monument was decorated with beautiful wreaths of flowers and evergreens."

Thirty-two years after the erection of the monument in the cemetery—that is to say, in April, 1904—the beautiful monument on the Court House square was completed. It represents much labor on the part of the Ladies' Memorial Association of Greensboro, who for many years worked to raise the necessary amount to pay for it. The cost was about \$1,500.00.

On May 12th, 1904, the monument was duly unveiled with appropriate ceremonies. Mrs. Mary G. Pickens, Chairman of the Committee and Treasurer of the Monument Fund, read the report from the Memorial Association, the concluding portion of which was as follows:

"We commend the monument to the loving care of the Memorial Association, Daughters of the Confederacy and Veterans. It is placed on a spot given for that purpose by the Hale county commissioners, and we give it into the sacred care and protection of our Mayor and Town Authorities and our entire community, and sincerely thank all who have helped us in any way.

Respectfully,

MRS. R. J. NELSON,  
MISS MARTHA YOUNG,  
MISS MARY E. AVERY,  
MRS. C. J. PIERCE,  
MRS. MARY G. PICKENS."

Wm. E. W. Yerby accepted the monument in behalf of the town as follows:

"Ladies of the Memorial Association:

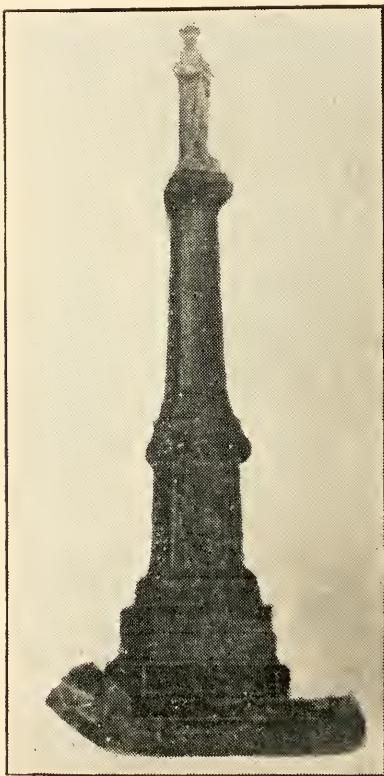
In behalf, and in the name of the Mayor and Council of the town of Greensboro, we accept the beautiful monument you have here erected in memory of our Confederate soldiers, and pledge the city's honor to throw around it that care and protection it may demand, for we realize that this shaft of granite and marble represents many years of labor on your part, and it silently speaks, in strains as sweet as angels use, of your love and devotion to the memory of those heroes whose valor and patriotism fill one of the brightest pages of the world's history. Nearly forty long and eventful years have passed away since the close of that bloody, fratricidal strife, but the memory of the gallant deeds and heroic conduct of the boys who wore the gray, is as fresh and green in the hearts of our fair and beautiful women as if the tragic event in our country's history had happened only yesterday. To you all honor and praise!

While we need no columns of brass or of stone to cause us to remember our heroic dead, nor to remind us of our duty to those who were their companions in arms on many hard fought battle fields, yet it is meet and proper that our love for them, and the cause for which they fought, should be expressed in tangible form, so that those who come among us from afar may know we revere their memory and gallant deeds, and that their glory shall never be forgotten "while fame her record keeps, or honor points to the hallowed spot where valor proudly sleeps."

"Yon marble minstrel's voiceless stone  
In deathless song shall tell  
When many a vanquished age hath flown  
The story how they fell;  
Nor wreck, nor change, nor winter's blight,

Nor Time's remorseless doom  
Shall dim one ray of glory light  
That gilds their deathless tomb."

Ex-Governor Wm. C. Oates then delivered a patriotic oration, at the close of which the stature of the Confederate soldier adorning the top of the monument was unveiled, and the ceremonies ended.



THE NEW CONFEDERATE MONUMENT.

Erected in 1904 in front of the Court House.

## Chapter XI

### RAILROADS.

There has been but one railroad in Greensboro—known at present as the Akron branch of the Southern Railway. It was projected by the late General N. B. Forrest, the famous Confederate cavalry leader, who was quite a familiar figure on the streets of Greensboro during the latter part of the sixties and the early seventies. The road was formerly known as the Selma, Marion & Memphis Railroad, and also as the Selma & Mobile Railroad.

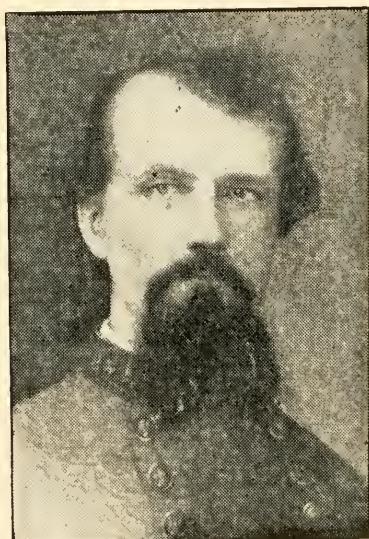
In 1869, the town of Greensboro issued \$15,000 worth of bonds to aid in the construction of the road to this place. A direct tax was put on the citizens to pay interest on the bonds and to provide a sinking fund to pay off the indebtedness. The obligation has been met. There are at present only a few thousand dollars worth of the old bonds outstanding against the town.

In this connection it will be of interest to note that the County of Hale also voted a bond issue of \$60,000 in 1869 to aid in the building of the road. All of said bonds—principal and interest—have been paid in full by the citizens of Hale—who were taxed directly for the purpose for about thirty-five years.

The railroad was completed to Greensboro on November 4th, 1870—work having been suspended on it for some months when it reached Newbern, nine miles below Greensboro, to which place the citizens went by hack to catch the train going to Selma, until the trains begun to make the trip from this point—and the laying of the

last rail was celebrated by a grand barbecue and public speaking by prominent Greensboro people. General Forrest, the President of the road, was present, and was very highly commended for his indomitable energy in successfully completing the work under so many adverse circumstances.

It was hoped that the line would be at once extended to the then objective point, (Eutaw) but for twelve years Greensboro was practically the terminus of the road. It was not until 1882 that the road was completed to



GEN. NATHANIEL BEDFORD FORREST.

From a portrait in possession of his descendants in Memphis, Tenn., and regarded by them as the only good likeness in existence.

Akron and the first train was run to that point. There it connects with the Alabama Great Southern Railroad, and at Selma it connects with the Southern Railway to Rome, Ga., and Meridian, Miss.

As stated above, General Forrest was quite a familiar figure on the streets of Greensboro during the construction of the railroad. He was a man who carried with him into his business life all those extraordinary physical, moral and intellectual qualities that distinguished him as a soldier. He was of commanding presence—being about six feet, two inches in height, and before his health was impaired by wounds received on the battlefields and by hard marches, his weight was one hundred and eighty to ninety pounds. In physical strength he was a match for a prize ring champion. His hair was jet black, his skin dark, eyes blue and mild enough till the devil within was aroused, and then they flashed green. He was the idol of the soldiers during the war, but as a business man he made many enemies by his overbearing and dictatorial manner. Some eminent men have adjudged that Forrest was really the greatest genius developed by the war between the States, so far as generalship was concerned. After completing his railroad work in this section, he moved to Memphis, Tenn., where he died some years ago.

The following incident in reference to the signing of the bonds issued by Hale County to aid in the construction of the railroad by General Forrest, is worthy of note: After the \$60,000 worth of bonds were printed, the probate judge of the county refused to sign them as required by law. General Forrest employed an attorney and demanded to be heard in the probate court in regard to the matter. A session of the court was called, the probate judge took his seat on the bench, and the General's lawyer arose and made a very learned and exhaustive argument on the subject of the judge's duty to sign the bonds. In the course of the argument the attorney used many high-sounding legal phrases—such as "nunc pro tune," "nolens volens," "amicus curiae," etc. The judge, who, by the way, was not a lawyer, seemed to get very angry as the lawyer indulged in these Latin phrases. At

the conclusion of the lengthy argument the judge said in a very determined manner, addressing the plaintiff's attorney:

"Sir, I don't give a damn about your *nunc pro tunes*, your *nolens volenses* or your *amicus curis*. I am not going to sign them bonds!"

The announcement aroused the anger of the lawyer, and he jumped up and started for the judge, who quickly reached under his desk and pulled a six shooter and held it on the astonished limb of the law.

As quick as a flash, Gen. Forrest, who was sitting near the judge, grabbed the pistol from his hand, caught him by the collar, dragged him from the bench and very quietly said:

"Wall, Jedge, I don't care a damn whether you sign them bonds *nunc pro tunc*, *nolens volens* or *amicus curi*; you are going to sign 'em. Come along in here with me!"

And the general led the judge into an ante-room, where they remained about half an hour.

When they came back into the court room the judge was smiling and at once signed the bonds.

What took place in the little private conference between Gen. Forrest and the judge will never be known.

General Forrest was probably the most daring and successful cavalry leader on either side in the civil war. He had the confidence of his men in a large degree, and they willingly followed him in his desperate encounters with the Federals. There were a number of cavalrymen from Greensboro and Hale county in his command—Dr. S. C. Carson, Dr. L. D. Webb and Judge W. C. Christian of the number.

Dr. Carson relates that while Forrest's cavalry was in camp at Ebenezer church, near Plantersville, Alabama, seventeen Federal soldiers made a sudden charge upon the Confederate lines, taking them wholly by surprise. The Doctor says he saw General Forrest rush forward to the encounter with a pistol in each hand and shoot down

three of the enemy. The seventeen Federals, the Doctor says, were as brave men as ever went upon a battlefield. They asked no quarter and gave none. It was a foolhardy undertaking and everyone of them paid the penalty with his life.

Col. L. J. Lawson and J. D. Hamilton enlisted in 1863 as members of Company B, 7th Alabama, Forrest's Cavalry, and were with the company until the end of the war in 1865.

It is the concensus of opinion of the old soldiers of the Confederacy now residing in this section, that if it had not been for the aggressive and fearless manner in which Forrest and his cavalry kept the Federals at bay, that Greensboro, Marion, Eutaw and other towns in this part of Alabama would have been destroyed by the enemy. The Federals did not get to Greensboro during the four years of the war.

### *Banks.*

In February, 1854, the Planters' Insurance Company was incorporated in Greensboro. Books for subscription to the capital stock were opened March 17th, 1854, and stock to the amount of \$130,000 was subscribed. Henry Watson, Esq., was the President. The company did a general insurance business and also a banking business, and was the first banking establishment ever in the town. It proved a great convenience to the citizens who had formerly done their banking business with the commission merchants and banks of Mobile and Selma. At the breaking out of the war between the States, in 1861, all except \$50,000 of the capital stock was returned to the stockholders, this amount being retained to keep alive the charter, and business was abandoned until better times should arrive. The war lasted so long, and its termination was so uncertain, that the company sold its real estate and personal effects and closed out the entire

concern, paying to the stockholders the capital and surplus in full. This was done in February, 1865. The company was never revived, and for ten years Greensboro was without banking facilities. The Planters' Insurance Company owned and did business in the store house on Main street owned of more recent years by the late W. G. Miller.



HENRY WATSON,

Who was a prominent citizen of Greensboro from 1838 to 1861. He was a law partner of Hon. John Erwin and was also the President of the first banking institution in the town. Died in 1891 in Northampton, Mass.

As indicative of the scope of the business engaged in by the Planters' Insurance Company, the following advertisement is copied from a publication of 1856:

PLANTERS' INSURANCE COMPANY.

Capital Stock \$130,000.

This Company, located at Greensboro, in Greene County, Ala-

bama, with a perpetual Charter, and a capital of \$130,000, all paid in and securely invested, will do a general Insurance Business. Public buildings, stores, stocks of merchandise, dwelling houses, gin houses and cotton warehouses, insured against loss by fire at reasonable rates. River and Marine risks taken, and insurance made upon the Lives of White Persons and of Slaves, and upon live stock. The well known standing and safety of this Company, and its convenient location, it is believed, will secure to it a preference where Insurance is desired. Money received on deposit with or without interest. Terms of deposit made known at the office of the Company. Loans made upon Bills of Exchange at 8 per centum per annum.

GIDEON E. NELSON,  
JOHN ERWIN,  
HENRY WATSON,  
JAMES A. WEMYSS,  
*Board of Directors.*

HENRY WATSON, President.  
SERENO WATSON, Secretary.

Sereno Watson, the Secretary, after the liquidation of the Planters' Insurance Company in Greensboro, went to Massachusetts, and subsequently became a very distinguished botanist. At the time of his death, which occurred at Cambridge, Mass., March 9, 1892, he was Curator of the Herbarium of Harvard College.

On January 1st, 1875, D. F. McCrary gave notice to the public that he had opened an Exchange and Banking office in Greensboro, and that he would buy and sell exchange on all points and would also receive money on deposit and pay out same on checks free of charge. He advertised that he had "one of the famous Speigle-eisen Safes with combination lock."

Mr. McCrary continued in the banking business until 1881 when he was succeeded by Dr. A. Lawson, who conducted the business until 1905 when "The Peoples Bank of Greensboro, Alabama," was incorporated under the laws of the State, with a capital stock of \$50,000, of which institution Dr. Lawson was made President by the stockholders.

James B. Coleman conducted a bank in Greensboro early in the "80's" but discontinued business in a few years.

Shelby W. Chadwick also did a banking business for some time, and was succeeded by M. Jones & Son, who, in 1900, were succeeded by Lee M. Otts. After conducting the bank as a private banking institution for a few years, Mr. Otts converted it into "The First National Bank of Greensboro, Alabama," with a capital stock of \$50,000 and conducted it as such until 1904.

In 1894 "The Bank of Greensboro, Ala.," was organized with Col. C. Derrick as President, who was succeeded in 1896 by J. A. Blunt. It was conducted under this name until 1904, when "The Bank of Greensboro" bought out the First National Bank from Mr. Otts, and assumed its name, and increased the capital stock from \$50,000 to \$100,000. Mr. Blunt was continued as President of the First National Bank, and Mr. Charles Stollenwerck was made cashier, both these gentlemen holding their respective positions to the present time.

In more than half a century in the history of banking in Greensboro, there has never been a bank failure, which record speaks for itself and the gentlemen who have conducted the institutions.

#### *Cotton Warehouses.*

In April, 1871, A. H. Ravesies & Co., established a cotton warehouse at the Greensboro depot, and conducted it as such until they were bought out by A. C. Evans, who for a number of years carried on the business of storing cotton. Mr. Evans in turn was bought out by Messrs. J. A. Blunt and T. R. Ward, who constructed a large brick warehouse, most of the materials used therein being taken from the wreckage of the "Nelson House," the largest, most commodious and most beautiful residence ever constructed in Greensboro. It was built by Gideon Nelson sometime in the latter part of the fifties, at a cost of nearly a hundred thousand dollars.

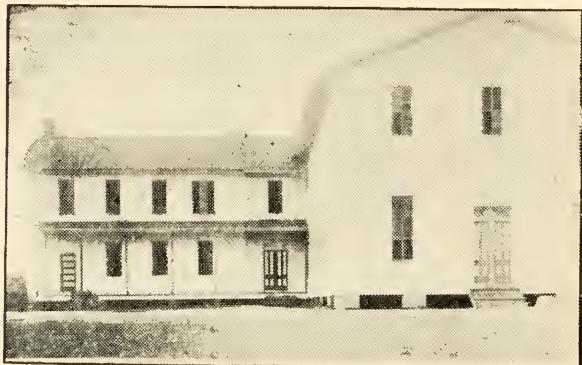
The floors of the lower story were of the finest marble,

and the ceilings were frescoed by painters from abroad. It was a gorgeous place. There were fountains in the front yard, and rarest shrubbery and trees adorned the place. The war wrecked the fortunes of the Southern planters, and after Mr. Nelson's death the house passed into the hands of various parties, and was finally torn down and the materials, as before stated, were used in the construction of the warehouse at the depot. In what was the front yard to this splendid mansion, there are now located some half dozen or more neat cottages. The warehouse constructed of the Nelson home materials was destroyed by fire in October, 1906, together with a large amount of cotton, which was paid for by the Southern Railway, as it was proven that a train on that road caused the fire. The present commodious warehouse is the successor to the one destroyed by fire. It was built by Mr. J. A. Blunt in 1907, he having bought out the interest of Mr. Ward in the business.



## Chapter XII

### THE GREENSBORO FEMALE ACADEMY.



THE OLD GREENSBORO FEMALE ACADEMY.

The brick portion has been standing for nearly three-quarters of a century.

In December, 1839, a meeting was held in the Greensboro Lyceum by the subscribers to the building fund of the Greensboro Female Academy. For a long while prior to this time a female school had been conducted in the same lot on which the Academy building now stands. Judge Pasteur was principal and was assisted by Miss Mary Lawson. Edwin Fay was the principal in 1839, and possibly further back, but no records on the subject are available.

At this meeting of the subscribers to the building fund the following board of trustees was elected: John Erwin, chairman, J. M. Witherspoon, John May, James Mc-

Donald, Matthew Hobson, Wiley J. Croom, and Robert Waller. John Fife was made secretary of the board. At the first meeting of this board of trustees, Edwin Fay was elected as president of the Academy, and Miss Ruth White as music teacher, and Dr. Bradford assistant music teacher.

In 1840, a contract was let to Jesse Gibson and Claudius Jones for \$6,345 to make necessary "additions to the present academy building." The work was finished in 1841, and in that year Edwin Fay resigned as president of the Academy and Rev. Daniel P. Bestor was elected to succeed him.

On December 29th, 1841, the act of the legislature incorporating "The Greensboro Female Academy," was approved. The incorporators mentioned in the Act were: Robert C. Randolph, James M. Witherspoon, Daniel P. Bestor, John May, James McDonald, Matthew Hobson, and Robert B. Waller.

The school was among the best and most prosperous in this section for a number of years, and was attended by young ladies from many portions of Alabama. The prescribed course of study the year of incorporation was: Spelling, reading, writing, grammar, geography, mathematics, philosophy, chemistry, history, logic, French, Latin, drawing, painting, ornamental work and music.

A complete list of the presidents of the Greensboro Female Academy is as follows: Judge Pasteur, Edwin Fay, Rev. Daniel P. Bestor, C. J. D. Pryor, Rev. James C. Mitchell, Rev. C. E. Brame, A. H. Hutchinson, N. T. Lupton and J. C. Wills, Miss Julia Tutwiler, P. B. Capbell, Miss Mary Avery (filled out unexpired term of P. B. Capbell in 1874) Rev. Thomas Ward White, Rev. W. C. Clark, D. P. Christenberry, J. B. Cassidy, Rev. W. G. Keady.

In 1876, Miss Bettie Lou Clark (afterwards Mrs. Pyrnell) the author of "Diddy, Dumps and Tot," a most popular book with children, was a teacher in this Academy.

From 1865 to 1871, the school was not opened on account of the stringency of the times immediately following the close of the civil war, and really it was never again as successful as it was prior to the war. It was again closed from 1877 to 1883, when Mr. Clark took charge of the institution. Some time during the intervening six years the trustees of the Academy opened subscriptions for money with which to repair and make additions to the building, and about \$4,000 was raised for this purpose. The large frame structure on the north side of the brick portion of the Academy was added. The last president was Dr. W. G. Keady, who gave the school up in 1900, since which time the property has been rented to the board of trustees of the Greensboro Graded School, where a large and successful public school has since been conducted.

The title to the property of the Greensboro Female Academy is vested in the board of trustees of that institution, who, it would appear from the minutes of the board, hold it in trust for the "stockholders"—said stockholders being composed of all those who contributed as much as \$25.00 towards the building fund. These stockholders held elections annually for the election of seven trustees, to whom was turned over the management of the property and the selection of a president.

The Greensboro Female Academy numbers many most excellent women among its graduates, who are scattered far and wide, and it was a source of regret to all when the doors of the time-honored institution were closed.

#### *Public School.*

In 1858, Miles Hassell Yerby, a graduate of the State University at Tuscaloosa, came to Greensboro and taught the first public school near the town of which any record can be found. The school house was situated outside of the corporate limits, northeast of Greensboro, across

Caldwell creek. The school was attended by many boys, who in after life, attained to prominence in the affairs of church and state. The location of the school was changed after the war, and the building on Centre-ville street then known as the Gibson place, was used for a long while as a school house. From the old record before us for 1869, (the only one that could be found) the following pupils were enrolled in the Greensboro Public School for that year: Reuben C. Johnson, Frank Johnson, Andrew W. Owens, Nelson Owens, Morris Steinhart, Charlie Steinhart, Jeff D. Steinhart, Joe Stockton, Willie Stockton, Joe Stokes, Dan Taylor, Milford Harris, Filmore Norfleet, Will Miller, Jeff Evans, Willie McGee, John Musy, John Yerby, Willie Yerby, Tom Taylor, Syd Taylor, Alex Davis, Willie DuBose, Willie Kenan, Ed Williamson, Steve Williamson, Albert Williamson, Ed Bell, John Bell, Mary Herran, Bettie Sharon, Rosa Sharon, Julia Wilburn, Fannie Owens, Sallie Owens, Bettie Andrews, Lida Miller, Alice Sledge, Jessie Yerby, Bettie McDonald, Ida Steinback, Sallie Blanton, Alice Blanton.

The teachers of the public school have been, in all its history, as follows: M. H. Yerby, Mrs. Mary Happel and Mrs. M. A. Hutchinson, Miss Sallie Pasteur, Mrs. J. M. Pickett and Miss Maggie Pickett, W. W. Lee, J. A. Baxley.

The present school is known as "The Greensboro Grad-ed School," and is taught in the old Female Academy building on Demopolis street. There is an attendance of about 130 pupils, and besides the principal, there are four assistant teachers.

The old school house on Centre-ville street presents much the same appearance now it presented some forty years ago, and the picture will no doubt be recognized by many of the former pupils, scattered far and wide over the face of the earth, into whose hands a copy of this volume should chance to fall. But they will miss

the wide-spreading elm trees in the yard—only one of the many now remaining, and it is gnarled, and the branches have been broken and torn by the winds that have angrily passed through them these many years. They will also miss the stately poplars on the hillside

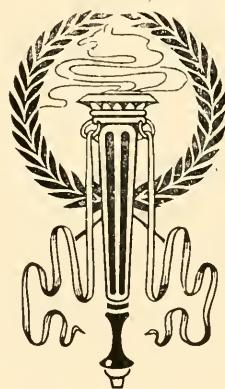


THE OLD PUBLIC SCHOOL HOUSE ON  
CENTREVILLE STREET.

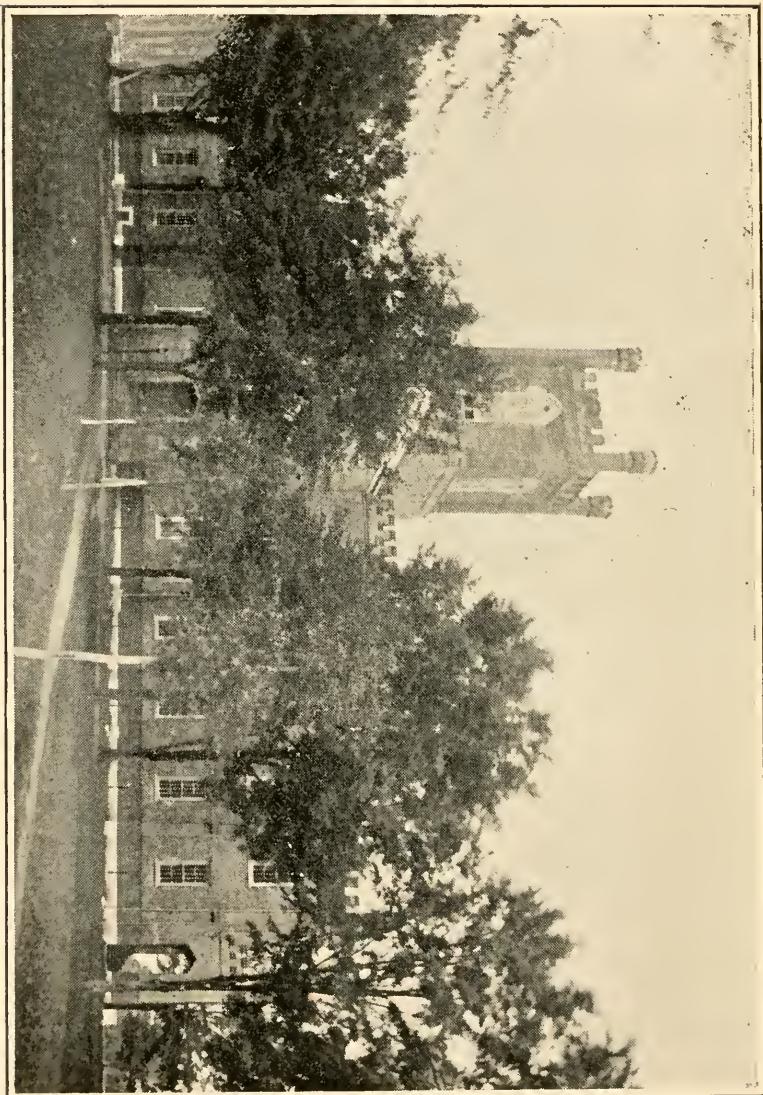
just north of the building, and the forest trees and the “big swamp” in the rear of the play ground. And the flowers have blossomed and faded above the grave of the highly educated and painstaking schoolmaster of the

old days for nearly ten years. He rests from life's labors in the quiet city of the dead in Greensboro among loved ones, friends and former pupils.

The same babbling brook is at the foot of the little hill to the north of the house, but the shade trees and the violets are gone, and the spot is no longer an inviting place for the school boy to stroll side by side with his first sweetheart and gather the wild flowers for her—as the boys used to do in the years that are dead.



MAIN BUILDING OF THE SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY.



## Chapter XIII

### THE SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY.

The greater portion of the following brief history of the Southern University was compiled by Prof. D. P. Christenberry, Professor of English in the University.

The agitation which led to the founding of the Southern University began at the twenty-third session of the Alabama Conference, Talladega, Ala., December, 1854. At this Conference much enthusiasm was aroused.

In 1855 the Conference met at Eutaw. After much debate it was decided to found a college at Greensboro, and Col. John Erwin, of Greensboro, was appointed to secure a charter of the legislature.

At the first meeting of the Board, March, 1856, at Greensboro, were the following trustees: Bishops Jas. O. Andrew and Robert Payne, Rev. Doctors T. O. Summers, Archelaus H. Mitchell, Jefferson Hamilton, Philip P. Neely and Edward Wadsworth, Revs. Christopher C. Callaway, Joseph J. Hutchinson, Joshua T. Heard, Thos. J. Koger, Lucius Q. C. DeYampert, Col. John Erwin, John W. Walton, Thomas M. Johnston, Robert A. Baker, Gideon E. Nelson, Doctors Thos. W. Webb and Gaston Drake. In the charter appear in addition to the above names the following: Judge Augustus A. Coleman, Duke W. Goodman and Rev. Henry W. Hilliard.

Col. Erwin was called to the chair and presented the charter dated January 26, 1856. The charter was secured over the veto of Governor Winston.

At this, the first meeting, a report was made by the agent, Rev. C. C. Callaway, showing that \$168,500 had

been raised, \$100,000 of which was secured by the endorsement of L. Q. C. DeYampert, John Walton, Gideon Nelson and others. The whole of this amount was secured from Greene and Sumter counties. A site was bought costing \$6,400. During the next year, the agent raised \$40,508, having visited only eight counties.

At the second annual meeting, June 11, 1857, with much pomp and splendor of military parade, bands and music, the cornerstone was laid. Col. Wiley, Masonic Grand Master of Alabama presided. Bishop Pierce and Col. Hilliard made the addresses.

The first session opened October 3, 1859, with the following faculty: Dr. William W. Wightman, President and Professor Biblical Literature; N. Thomas Lupton, A. M., Professor of Chemistry; Oscar F. Casey, A. M., Professor of Ancient Languages; Edward Wadsworth, A. M., Professor of Moral Philosophy; John C. Wills, A. M., Professor of Mathematics.

At the first commencement, the date of which was fixed for the first Wednesday in July, 1860, Benjamin Huey, of Talladega, and John V. Glass of Pickens county, graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

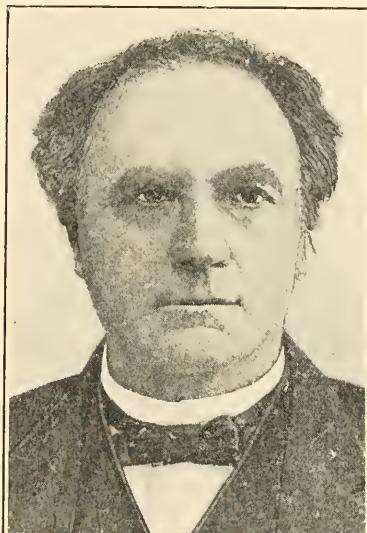
The faculty in 1861 reported much excitement among the boys on account of the war between the States, and expressed difficulty in preventing their going. The young men had been drilled for service, to which slight objection is expressed by the Trustees.

The professors' salaries, which had been fixed at \$1500, were reduced one-half, and they were permitted to secure additional work outside if possible.

During the entire session of '61 and '62 only \$1150 was paid to the entire faculty, and they were praised for standing by the University under the circumstances. The institution did not close its doors during the war, but the enrollment ran down to fourteen. Still instruction was given in all classes, at times chiefly by one man.

At the opening of the session in 1865 not a single class could be formed, but Professor Casey, during the year, gave instruction in classics to twenty young men. There were forty-three in the Preparatory Department under Professor Casey. Though the struggle through the war was hard, it seems the doors were never closed.

Reconstruction was almost as hard as the period of war. In 1867, the agent, the Rev. Mr. Callaway, re-



REV. ALLEN S. ANDREWS, D. D.,

Who was for a long while one of the most distinguished Presidents of the Southern University. He died at Union Springs, Ala., December 4, 1898, aged 74 years.

ported that \$171,810.66 in notes was placed in his hands. Of this amount \$4,683 was collected in cash, \$16,000 was renewed, \$40,000 was classed as possibly good and \$75,000 as worthless. The magnificent endowment had been swept away, leaving the school a lot of worthless

paper which was carried upon the book for years. The buildings were intact and free from debt.

Hamilton Hall, the present dormitory, was secured in 1868 by the foreclosure of a mortgage held by the University.

The North Mississippi Conference adopted the Southern University as its college in 1870, and appointed six trustees to sit on the Board. This adoption must have been short lived, for no further mention is made in the minutes of the Board of Trustees.

The seventies were the dark days in the history of the school. Even the people of Greensboro thought the school would close after the session of 1871-72. Some of the buildings were placed under mortgage, and afterwards foreclosed. There was even some remote danger of the loss of the main building itself. But Chancellor Luther Smith came from Emory College, Oxford, Ga., at a great personal sacrifice because he thought the service of the church called him, and infused new life into the institution. The debts were wiped out, and the institution was placed in a fair way to prosperity when death removed the chancellor.

The second advent of Dr. Andrews as president, in 1883, marks the beginning of a remarkable period in the history of the Southern University. In that year the property became joint possession, in fee simple, of the Alabama and North Alabama conferences. An era of prosperity ensued. The largest attendance in the history of the institution was reached in 1889-90, 238 names having been placed upon the matriculation book of that session.

The North Alabama Conference, at its session at Florence, on December 23, 1897, deeded back its interests in the school to the original patron, the Alabama Conference.

Under the administration of Dr. J. O. Keener much was done towards the upbuilding of the school. The in-

terior of the main building was greatly improved, and the chapel remodeled into a beautiful auditorium.

A splendid gymnasium was erected on the campus in 1907.

In 1904 the plan of government was changed. All restrictions were removed, and the school placed upon the honor system. The results have been highly gratifying.

*Presidents of the Southern University.*

Wm. W. Wightman, 1859-1867.

Edward Wadsworth, 1868-1870.

Allen S. Andrews, 1871-1875.

Luther M. Smith, 1875-1879.

Josiah Lewis, 1880-1881.

Francis M. Peterson (acting president), 1881-1883.

Allen S. Andrews, 1883-1894.

John O. Keener, 1894-1898.

Samuel M. Hosmer, 1899-to present.

*Faculty of the Southern University.*

Dr. Edward Wadsworth, A. M., 1859-'70. Moral Philosophy.

N. Thomas Lupton, A. M., 1869-'71. Chemistry.

O. F. Casey, A. M., 1869-'76. Ancient Languages.

J. C. Wills, A. M., 1859-'71. Mathematics.

J. A. Reubelt, 1860-'61. Modern Languages.

John S. Moore, A. M., 1871-'84. Mathematics.

D. M. Rush, A. M., 1872-'74. Mathematics.

Dr. T. O. Summers, Jr., 1871-'74. Chemistry.

I. S. Hopkins, 1876-'78. Science.

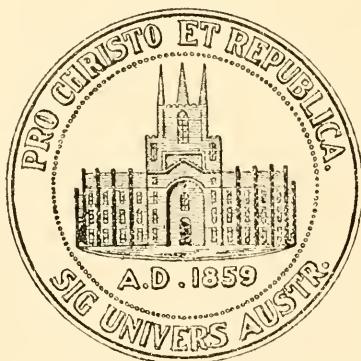
C. A. Grote, A. M., 1876-'94. Science and Modern Languages.

Rev. J. Lewis, Jr., 1875-'81. English.

C. M. Verdel, A. M., 1876-'81. Science.

F. M. Peterson, A. M., 1877-'99. Ancient Languages.

J. A. Moore, Ph. D., 1883-'94. Mathematics.  
L. C. Dickey, 1883-'84. English and History.  
Rev. J. F. Sturdivant, 1885-'90. English.  
E. L. Brown, B. S., 1889-'03. Science.  
C. L. McCartha, 1890-'92. English.  
D. P. Christenberry, A. M., 1892. English.  
L. P. Giddens, A. B., 1894-1907. Mathematics.  
Rev. J. W. Shoaff, D. D., 1899-'02. Mental and Moral Philosophy.  
J. T. Littleton, A. M., 1899. Modern Languages.  
E. K. Turner, Ph. D., 1899-'03. Ancient Languages.  
Andrew Sledd, Ph. D., 1903-'04. Greek.  
E. L. Colebeck, M. A., 1902-1907. Ancient Languages.  
B. P. Richardson, B. S., 1903. Science.  
C. P. Atkinson, A. M., 1904. Mental and Moral Philosophy.  
F. E. Chapman, A. M., 1907. Mathematics.  
D. M. Key, A. M., 1907. Ancient Languages.



## Chapter XIV

### CHURCHES.

*The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, of Greensboro.*

The earliest records of this church were lost, and have never been in the possession of the present generation, nor that of the one this generation succeeds. This fact is borne out by the following statement taken from the minutes of the Quarterly Conference held on the 25th of April, 1835:

“A. B. Sawyer, John DuBois and S. G. Field were appointed a committee to search for and arrange the records of the church, and have them recorded.” Evidently these gentlemen failed to find the records, for there is no further mention of the matter in any of the succeeding minutes kept by the church officials. However, it is known that as early as the year 1822 there was a Methodist church in Greensboro. It stood where the negro Methodists now have their brick church in the rear of the Dr. Ward homestead. One among the first Methodist ministers to preach in Greensboro was the Rev. Mr. Hawkins.

Some time between the years 1822 and 1833, Greensboro was made a station. The records from which this history is compiled begin with the latter year, and at that time Rev. Mr. Hearn was presiding elder of the Greensboro district, and Rev. Robert L. Kenon was preacher in charge at this place. The stewards were: Robert Dickens and Franklin Shaw. The Revs. Hearn and Kenon were succeeded in 1835 by Rev. E. V. LeVert,

presiding elder, and Rev. S. B. Sawyer, preacher in charge.

At a meeting of the Quarterly Conference held March 11th, 1837, a committee, composed of Robert Dickens, Thomas Johnston and Andrew Walker, was appointed to take under consideration the necessity and expediency of building a parsonage for the station. At the next meeting of the Quarterly Conference, held June 10th, 1837, this committee reported, and recommended that a parsonage be purchased as soon as possible, and asked the Conference to allow them to open a subscription for the purpose—subscriptions to be made payable the following January. The report was received, and the committee was urged to press the matter, but pending the purchase of a suitable building, Dr. William Jones offered the church the use of a house that stood just west of the present Madison Jones lot, which offer was accepted, and for some years the Methodist ministers resided there. The house was torn down ten or a dozen years ago. Finally the Methodists decided to own their parsonage, and purchased the (then) Randolph lot,—the same now owned and occupied by Thomas Johnson—and this was used as a parsonage until the year 1866, when it was sold, and with the proceeds the lot upon which the present parsonage stands was purchased, and again for nine years the Methodists were without a home for the preacher, for it was not until 1875 that the present parsonage was erected. But really no home for the minister was needed, for the church was supplied, with one or two exceptions, for nearly twenty years, with a professor from the Southern University, by the annual conferences. But in 1886 this method was changed, and a preacher was sent who was to devote his entire time to the charge.

At the meeting of the Quarterly Conference in June, 1837, Thomas M. Johnston and Joel Reynolds were appointed stewards, in place of Greene B. Williams, de-

ceased, and Stephen G. Field, removed. At this same meeting (June 10, 1837) the stewards were appointed a building committee to "build a new Methodist church in the town of Greensboro, Alabama," "and it is recommended," said the conference, "that the house be built at once."

It was decided to remove from the place where the church had been located for some years, and the old lot and edifice standing thereon were disposed of to the negroes, and in 1837 the lot at the intersection of Main and Tuscaloosa streets (where the church now stands) was purchased from Matthew Hobson for the sum of \$1,000.00.

On March 16, 1839, the Quarterly Conference appointed a committee to superintend the building of the new church, said committee consisting of Dr. William Jones, Dr. Thomas Cottrell, Thomas M. Johnston, John M. Bates and Andrew Walker. The contractor was Robert Dickens.

The work on the new building was pushed quite rapidly for those days when the brick had to be made and burned at home, and the timber had to be gotten out by hand—for in a little more than a year after the appointment of a committee to superintend the building the church was dedicated—April 3, 1840. Rev. E. V. LeVert preached the sermon, his text being: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

At the time of the dedication, the church had a membership of one hundred and sixteen whites; the Sunday School had two superintendents, nine teachers and sixty pupils.

Church matters seem not to have prospered with the Methodists in a financial way during the next few succeeding years, if the following from the minutes of the Quarterly Conference, held February 2, 1846, is to be taken as an indication:

"In view of the indebtedness of this Station, be it Resolved, That it be returned to the Circuit; Provided, That first the matter be brought before the whole Society on next Sabbath, and that if they will come forward and pay all arrearages and promise to sustain the Station, it shall remain as such."

On the following Sunday the matter was brought before the congregation, and the alternative of either returning to the Circuit or paying up arrearages was submitted to them, and they chose to liquidate the indebtedness and remain as a Station.

The building that was torn away in June, 1907, to make room for the present handsome and commodious structure, was practically the same as the one erected 1839-40.

For several years the question of building a new church was discussed by the membership, and finally the matter was definitely decided by its being ascertained that the roof of the old building was in a dangerous condition, and was liable to fall in. Nothing was left for the Methodists to do but to either repair the old structure at great cost, or to build a new one, and at a meeting of the Quarterly Conference held on January 29, 1907, it was decided to build a new church, and the following building committee was appointed: Dr. S. M. Hosmer, chairman, F. D. Gulley, R. F. Monette, Wm. E. W. Yerby, Thomas Johnson, Thomas E. Knight, L. J. Lawson, W. C. Christian and E. A. Powers.

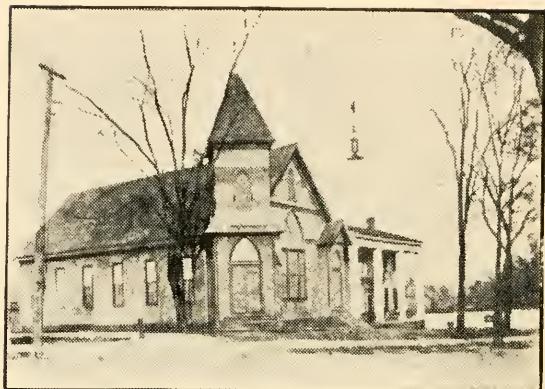
The contract was let to John A. Straiton, contractor, for \$17,984.91, and work on the present building was begun on June 21, 1907, and finished in June, 1908. The above price does not include the interior furnishings. These cost in the neighborhood of \$10,000—including windows, organ and heating. While the church was building, services were held for more than a year in the Greensboro Opera House, which was kindly tendered the congregation free of rent, by the owner, Mr. J. A. Blunt.

The following is as complete a list of the presiding elders and preachers in charge who have served this district and station as it was possible to obtain:

PRESIDING ELDERS—Rev. Mr. Hearn, 1833; E. V. LeVert, 1835-36; Francis H. Jones, 1838; E. V. LeVert, 1839-41; Charles McCloud, 1842-45; Edmund Pearson, 1846-48; P. P. Neely, 1849; Greenberry Garrett, 1850-51; T. J. Kager, 1852-55; J. W. Starr, 1856; J. J. Hutchinson, 1857-58; T. J. Ramsey, 1859; Edward Wadsworth, 1860; J. W. Starr, 1861; C. C. Calloway, 1862-65; Abram Adams, 1866; J. L. Cotton, 1867-68; A. H. Mitchell, 1871-79; S. H. Cox, 1880; H. Urquhart, 1881-84; J. Bancroft, 1884-86; T. J. Mangum, 1886- O. R. Blue, J. R. Peavy, J. Bancroft, O. C. McGehee, Jno. A. Peterson, W. P. Hurt, E. A. Dannelly—a total of 29.

*Preachers in Charge.*

Robert L. Kenon, 1833; S. B. Sawyer, 1835; F. H. Jones, 1836; Claiburne Pirtle, 1837; E. V. LeVert, and C. Shannon, ass't preacher, 1838; James A. Boatright, 1839-40; W. W. Bell, and W. W. Thomas, ass't preacher, 1840-41; W. Dorman, 1843; Thomas Capers, 1845; C. C. Gillespie, 1846; T. P. Shelman, 1848; C. D. Oliver, 1849-50; A. H. Powell, 1851-52; J. J. Hutchinson, 1853; C. C. Calloway, 1854-55; Edward Wadsworth, 1856-57; William Shapard, 1858-59; T. J. Ramsey, 1860-61; J. A. Heard, 1862; R. K. Hargrove, 1863; T. T. Ramsey, 1864-65; T. O. Summers, 1866; J. C. Wills, 1866; T. C. Weir, 1867-68; John S. Moore, 1869-71; A. S. Andrews, 1872-75; O. R. Blue, 1875; H. Urquhart, 1876; J. Lewis, Jr., 1877-80; F. M. Peterson, 1881-84; A. S. Andrews, 1885; W. P. Dickinson, 1886-89; O. C. McGehee, 1889-92; J. O. Keener, 1893-4; A. S. Andrews, July 1894; W. M. Cox, 1894-98; C. L. Chilton, 1898-1902; T. R. McCarty, 1902-03; E. L. Crawford, 1903-06; Henry Trawick, 1907—a total of 42.



THE GREENSBORO BAPTIST CHURCH.

*The Baptist Church.*

The Baptist denomination was among the earliest, and at one time the most important, of the Christian denominations in Greensboro and vicinity. The Rev. Joseph Ryan in 1819 organized the first Baptist church in this part of the State. It was known as Salem Baptist church, and was situated in the eastern part of Greensboro near where the Marion and Newbern roads fork. The members who were present at the organization were: James Hutchins, Offa Caloway, Samuel Caloway, Thomas and James Gresham, David Eddins and Messrs. Thomas and Seaton. In addition to those mentioned, other members were: Louis and David Stevens, C. C. Latimore, Thomas Ward, James Brantley and wife. In 1820 a large frame church was built. It had neither laths nor plaster, with wooden shutters, without glass, and was seated with wooden benches. This church stood on the south side of the Main road and immediately east of the present Newbern road. Near the head of the swampy hollow in the rear of the Williamson old place (at present owned by

Mrs. Walker) was the pool for baptism—a square reservoir with steps descending into it—without a roof.

The Rev. Joseph Ryan was pastor of Salem Baptist church for about twenty years. He came to Greensboro from South Carolina, and was ordained as a minister at Tuscaloosa, Ala., in 1819. After resigning his pastorate here he moved to Sumter county, residing near Gaston, where he died in 1845. Rev. Daniel P. Bestor succeeded Mr. Ryan as pastor, a position he filled with marked ability for some years. He also had charge of the Greensboro Female Academy from 1841 to 1846, and also represented Greene county in the Legislature several terms. He died in Mobile on the 9th of April, 1869, aged about 65 years.



REV. THOMAS CHILTON,

One of the early Pastors of the Greensboro Baptist Church.

Rev. Thomas Chilton succeeded Mr. Bestor as pastor, and remained as such until about 1850, when he moved to Newbern, Ala., where he resided for two years and then went to Texas, where he died some years afterwards.

During the years 1851-52-53, Rev. C. F. Sturgis was pastor. He in turn was succeeded by Revs. Russell Holman, W. S. Barton, W. C. Buck, J. C. Wright, and T. W. Toby until 1865 when the church ceased to exist.

In 1842, Peter McIntyre, for the consideration of \$2,700, sold to the Baptists the lot on which the court house now stands, and they proceeded at once to build what was then considered the finest church edifice in west Alabama. John Crossland was the contractor. This building was, in 1867, sold to the town of Greensboro, and by the town donated to Hale county as a court house, and served as such until 1907, when the old building was torn away to make room for the present court house. The town paid the Baptists \$8,000 for the property.

In 1820, the Cahaba Baptist Association convened in Salem church, and in 1823, while the church was on the lot at the forks of the Marion and Newbern roads, the Alabama Baptist State Convention was organized. There were present twenty delegates, representing twenty-eight churches with a membership of about 7,000.

Salem church, in its day and time, numbered among its membership many prominent people. Besides those already mentioned may be added Dr. W. T. Hendon, Green Huckabee, Hayward Lawrence, Harris Tinker, Wiley Croom, C. C. Huckabee, Jesse Croom, George Deal, Mrs. Kissie Croom, George Pollard and Messrs. Coates and Harmon.

In 1834 the Baptist Convention met with Salem church and established the Baptist Manual Labor School. Some objected to the name "Manual Labor," and it was later called "The Alabama Institute of Literature and Industry." This school was located in the neighborhood of the

old Breen place about a mile northeast of the present court house. The school was largely attended for several years. The pupils were required to do a certain amount of labor in the field or elsewhere each day, for which they were allowed a small sum per hour. A. J. Holcombe was Secretary of the Board of Trustees. The institution proved a failure, and the buildings were sold at auction. These buildings were a row of one-story frame houses of two rooms each, with shutters at the windows. There were a half dozen or more of them.

When Salem Baptist church was dissolved in 1865 the Baptists were left unorganized in Greensboro, until February 18, 1894, when the present church was established. On that date nine Baptists met in the court house and organized "The Greensboro Baptist Church." Rev. W. B. Crumpton, D. D., Secretary of the State Board of Missions, and Rev. S. O. Y. Ray, State Evangelist, assisted in the organization. The constituent members were: T. J. Kinnaird, Wm. Martin, Mrs. Rachael Martin, Thomas Mitchell, R. D. Redding, Misses Mattie Redding and Nannie Redding, and P. H. Wilkerson and wife. The church was duly incorporated on the 10th day of September, 1894.

On July 8th, 1894, Rev. A. R. Hardy, the first pastor of "The Greensboro Baptist Church," begun his work, services being held in the court house until the present church edifice was erected. On August 8th, 1896, the property on which the church and the pastorium now stand was purchased from D. W. Taylor, Syd Taylor and Lily Taylor, the deed being made to the Alabama State Convention. The lot and the residence standing thereon (the present pastorium) cost \$1600.

The first Sunday School was organized in 1895 with P. H. Wilkerson as superintendent. The first baptisms—seven in number—took place Nov. 22, 1896, in a pool, made for the purpose, in the rear of Col. L. J. Lawson's pasture on Tuscaloosa street.

Rev. A. R. Hardy, labored earnestly and most efficiently for the upbuilding of the church until his death on December 1, 1896 at Greensboro. The membership was largely increased under his ministry, and it was through his untiring efforts that the present church was erected.

In April 1897, Rev. Mr. Barnes was called as pastor, but remained only a short while. During the years 1898 and 1899 Rev. R. G. Patrick, D. D., President of the Judson Institute, supplied the church.

On the 7th day of July, 1899, the contract was let to John A. Straiton to build a one story frame church on the Northeast corner of Centreville and Main Streets. The cost was about \$2600. The building was commenced in October, 1899, and completed in March, 1900. It was dedicated on January 14, 1900,—Dr. W. B. Crumpton preaching the dedicatory sermon.

In March, 1900, Rev. W. W. Lee became pastor, and continued as such until his resignation in September, 1902. Rev. John G. Apsey kept up the preaching services after Mr. Lee's resignation until the arrival of Rev. T. M. Thomas as pastor in June, 1903. In July, 1904, Rev. T. M. Thomas tendered his resignation and went as a missionary to China.

From the time of Mr. Thomas's resignation until the coming of Rev. J. G. Dobbins as pastor in June, 1905, Maj. John G. Harris filled the pulpit once a month.

From a membership of nine in 1894 it has steadily grown, until there are in the neighborhood of one hundred enrolled as members of "Hardy Memorial Baptist Church" at Greensboro.



ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

*Episcopal Church.*

As far as can be ascertained, the first service by a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church was held in Greensboro on the 14th day of March, 1830. On that date a congregation was duly organized, the original compact being signed by the following persons: R. E. Meade, R. W. Withers, Wm. T. Bolling, T. B. Randolph, J. B. Stickney, Jno. F. Abbott, Ryland Randolph, T. S. Washington, John Morrast, John Malone and D. W. Wither-spoon. The following composed the first Vestry: Dr. Richard E. Meade, Dr. R. Inge, Dr. R. C. Randolph, Frank Inge, Esq'r, Dr. R. W. Withers, Wm. Murphy, Esq'r, J. B. Stickney, Esq'r, Col. Samuel Pickens and J. Bell, Esq'r. At a meeting held August 22d, 1831, by

this Vestry it was resolved to enter into negotiations for the erection of a church edifice, but this plan failed to materialize, and the attempt to organize a parish at this time was abandoned.

On December 24th, 1833, at a meeting held by a number of citizens, certain persons were appointed as vestrymen, and St. Paul's, Greensboro, was selected as the name of the parish, but not until about 1840 was this parish duly incorporated.

In 1834, the Rev. C. S. Ives was connected with this parish, but how long his connection lasted is not known. The Rev. J. B. Goodman took charge of the work in 1837 and continued to serve as rector until 1842, when he was succeeded by Rev. Julian E. Sawyer. The next rector was Rev. S. Patterson who, in 1845, was succeeded by Rev. J. S. Marbury, who continued the work until 1850, at which time he tendered his resignation on account of ill health. He died in Greensboro in September, 1851, and was buried in the churchyard of St. Paul's.

The Rev. J. M. Bannister was the next rector, who remained in the parish from 1851 to 1860, when he was succeeded by Rev. Richard Hooker Cobbs, D. D., who took charge on September 1st, 1861, and served continuously for forty-six years,—resigning the rectorship in September, 1907. He was again re-elected as Rector in March 1908, and so urgent was the request on the part of Vestry and congregation, that he accepted.

The present church building was erected in 1840, but has been considerably improved since that time—a chancel being added in 1855, and the building was enlarged and much improved in 1872. The Sunday School room, immediately north of the church, was erected in 1906.

The first baptism recorded in this parish was on January 14, 1838, and confirmation was administered for the first time on Good Friday, April 13, 1838, by Rt. Rev. Dr. Kepper, Missionary Bishop of Missouri.

In 1840 Bishop Polk visited this parish, and in May, 1844, Rev. Dr. Cobbs, father of the rector who served the parish forty-six years, was elected the first Bishop of Alabama, by a convention sitting in this church.



GREENSBORO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

*Presbyterian Church.*

The first sermon ever preached in Greensboro by a Presbyterian minister was some time prior to 1822, when Mr. Hunter delivered a discourse. In 1822, Rev. James Hillhouse came from South Carolina and delivered his

first sermon in a small house used as a tavern. The next year (1823) he organized a church of twenty members, and the same year a house of worship was erected where Mrs. Mary G. Pickens now resides. On the first roll are the names of Norris, Knox, Hall, Hunter, Hillhouse, Darragh, Bell and Barron. Except during the period from 1830-1832 Mr. Hillhouse served as pastor until his death in 1835. Such was the growth of the church under his administration that the congregation was able to offer in 1836 a salary of \$2,000 per year.

In 1837 Rev. T. R. Witherspoon became the pastor of the church and held the position until 1843.

The following ministers subsequently served the church either as stated supplies or as regular pastors, viz:

Rev. L. D. Hatch, spring of 1843; Rev. R. C. Yale, 1843 and 1844; Rev. R. H. Chapman, 1845 to 1850; Rev. J. C. Mitchell, 1850 to 1859; Rev. F. H. Bowman, 1859 to 1860; the church pastorate was vacant 1861 and 1862; Rev. J. M. P. Otts, D. D., 1862 to 1867; Rev. D. D. Sanderson, 1868 to 1871; vacant 1871 and 1872; Rev. W. J. Frierson, 1872 and 1873; Rev. Thomas Ward White, 1874 to 1879; Rev. J. J. Anderson, 1880 and 1881; Rev. W. C. Clark, May 1882 to 1886; Rev. W. G. Keady, 1889 to 1902; Rev. J. P. Anderson, 1902 to present (1908).

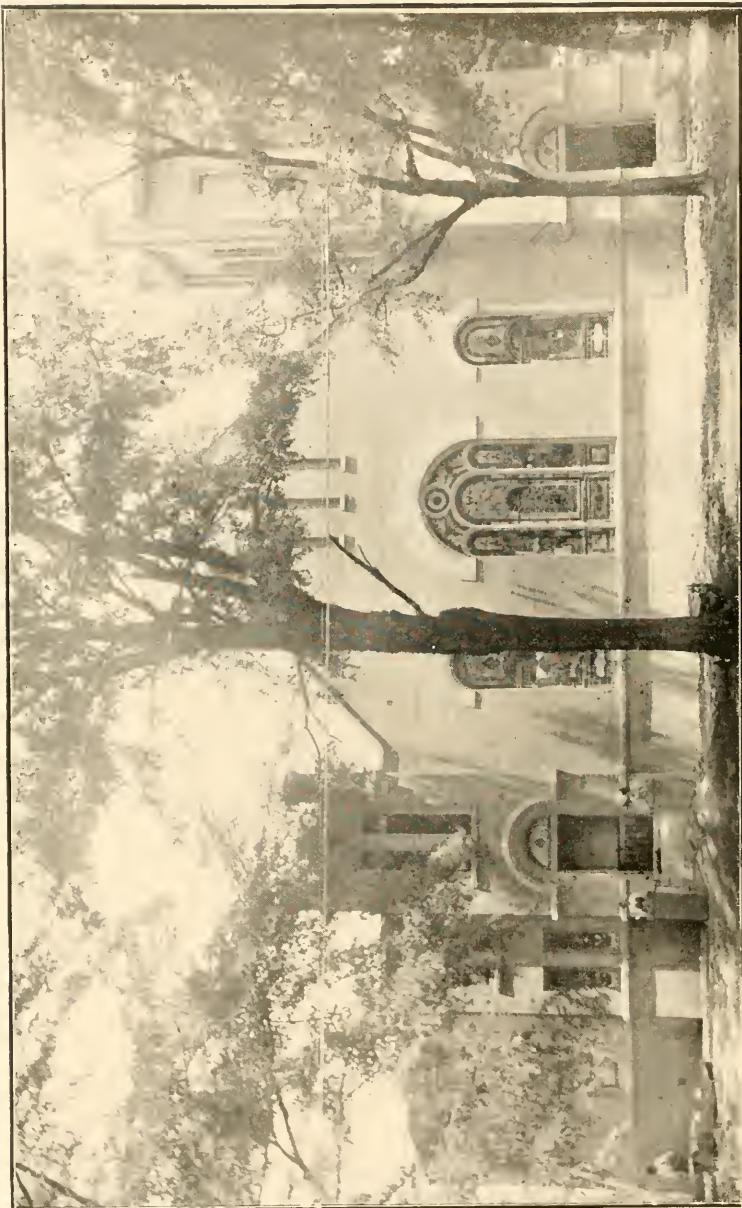
The church has numbered among its membership some of Greensboro's most honored and prominent men. On the roll will be found such names as Witherspoon, Kerr, Locke, Lowry, May, Strudwick, Webb, Carson, Castleman, Boardman and others. The number of persons brought into the church since its organization has been something over six hundred.

This church has furnished seven or eight ministers, and there have been associated with it, as pastors, seven ministers: Witherspoon, Chapman, Mitchell, Otts, Clark, Keady and Anderson; and as stated supplies, nine: Hill-

house, Murphy, Hatch, Yale, Bowman, Sanderson, Frier-  
son, White and Anderson.

Three houses of worship have been built—1823,  
1841 and 1859, in the latter year the present edifice was  
erected.

Miss Emma Boardman, a member of this church, went  
as a missionary to China in March, 1894, and is yet at her  
post of duty.



GREENSBORO METHODIST CHURCH.

## Chapter XV.

### LODGES.

#### *Masonic.*

The Masonic Lodge now in existence in Greensboro—known as Lafayette No. 26—dates back to the year 1826, though it would appear from the minutes of the Lodge that it was the successor to one which had formerly been organized in the town. From an old, faded and dim minute entry the following is taken:

“*By virtue of the foregoing Dispensation from the Right Worshipful John B. Hogan, Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Alabama, a special communication of the Lafayette Lodge No. 26, was begun and held at the store house of Samuel Reed & Co., in the town of Greensborough on the 19th of August A. L. 5826, A. D. 1826.*”

There were present at this first communication the following: Josiah Downing, Worshipful Master; Franklin Shaw, Senior Warden; Ebernezer Whiting, Junior Warden; Nathan Baker, Treasurer; Thomas B. Childress, Secretary; James B. Scott, Senior Deacon; Benjamin H. Mann, Junior Deacon; Lathan Cooper, Tyler; also visiting brethren J. B. Stickney, James C. Harrell and William T. Scott.

A committee was appointed “to collect the jewels and furniture of the former lodge held at this place, value them, and report at the next communication.”

In order to ascertain something in regard to the “former lodge” referred to in the above, a letter was written to the Grand Secretary at Montgomery, the reply to which is here inserted:

Montgomery, Ala., March 18, 1907.

Mr. William E. W. Yerby,  
Greensboro, Ala.

Dear Sir & Brother:-

I am in receipt of your favor of the 16th instant and take pleasure in giving you the information we have concerning the first Lodge instituted in your city.

The name of said Lodge was Washington No. 17. The petition on which dispensation was issued said Lodge January 8, 1822 was signed by Hiram Shortridge, Ina Nelson, Ebenezer Whiting, Samuel G. Briggs, Samuel Dickenson, Lawrence Carr, Joseph Middlebrooks, Joseph B. Stickney. Recommended by Rising Virtue Lodge No. 4.

November 27, 1822 petition for Charter signed by Joseph B. Stickney, W. M., and blank date 1822, another petition for Charter signed by Thomas Sheridan, John L. Martin, James Means, Henry Halbert, Thomas Westbrook, Allen M. Donald, John C. Dunn, I. E. Norris, T. L. Jernigan, Wiat Harper, John Thomas, John C. Whittsett recommending Thomas Sheridan, W. M., Henry Halbert, S. W., John P. Martin, J. W.

A Charter was issued December 10, 1823 to Thomas Sheridan, Henry Halbert and John P. Martin, signed by Horatio G. Perry, Dep. G. M., David Moore, Dep. G. W., A. Hutcheson, S. G. W., Thomas Owen, J. G. W., W. I. Adair, Grand Secretary, p. t.

Returns—1822, 17 members, 1823, 12 members, 1824, 9 members and 1825, 14 members.

The Lodge surrendered its Charter, Jewels, etc., June 10, 1825. The books, jewels, etc., were delivered to I. Downing, W. M., of Lafayette Lodge No. 26 in August 1826, with a petition to the Grand Lodge that its members be permitted to join Lafayette Lodge, signed by the W. Master Henry Halbert.

As it may be of some interest to you, I enclose copy of letter written by Henry Halbert, W. M., protom of said Lodge.

Yours fraternally,

Geo. A. Beauchamp,  
Grand Secretary.

To the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Free Masons of Alabama:

Prior to the dissolution of Washington Lodge No. 17 held at the Orient of Greensborough the meetings were so thinly attended and the members so dispersed that it was not in my power to make a return to the last annual communication of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, and therefore solicit their indulgence for any omission of duty I may have reluctantly committed.

Agreeably to an order of the right Worshipful first deputy Grand Master dated in August last, I delivered the funds and furniture of the late Washington Lodge No. 17 to Brother I. Downing, Worshipful Master of Lafayette Lodge in this place, as also the books and papers. The funds of the late Washington Lodge were barely sufficient to defray the expenses and it was with some difficulty that I have been enabled to collect the necessary dues to the Grand Lodge *forwarded herewith*: I therefore hope and trust that the restrictions, if any, may be removed so far as that: Every

member of the late Washington Lodge who has paid up his dues and is otherwise thought deserving may be permitted to join Lafayette Lodge.

(Signed)

HENRY HALBERT,  
W. M. protem of the late Washington Lodge.

Greensborough, 11th Dec., A. L. 5826.

At a communication of Lafayette Lodge No. 26, held on February 20th, 1827, it was ordered "that a petition for a Charter for this Lodge be forwarded to the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Alabama before the next regular communication."

The Charter was promptly granted, and bears date of March 21st, 1827. It designates Franklin A. Shaw as Worshipful Master; Josiah Downing as Senior Warden, and Ebenezer Whiting as Junior Warden. The Charter is signed by Nimrod E. Benson, Grand Master, John B. Hogan, Deputy Grand Master, and John G. Acker as Grand Secretary. The sheep-skin upon which the charter is written is now yellow with age, and has been in the lodge room for more than three-quarters of a century; yet, it is in a fairly good state of preservation, and is likely to witness the coming and going of several more generations of Masons.

No reference is made in the ancient minutes of the Lodge in regard to where the communications were held from August, 1826, until January, 1833, at which time the agitation of the question of building a lodge room was begun. From some of the old inhabitants we have heard that the Masons met in the early days in a building situated somewhere near the present shops of George DeLaney—this location was probably where Washington No. 17 met.

It would seem that the Lodge went to work in earnest on the lodge room proposition, for at a special communication held on February 15th, 1833, the following appears on the minutes:

The committee appointed to select a lot on which to erect a lodge room reported "that the lot of Col. McAlpine cannot be obtained on the terms anticipated by the Lodge,

and that Mr. Sanders' lot could not be obtained without restriction." Thereupon it was ordered

"that Mr. Sanders' lot and Mr. Peck's lot be put in nomination, and the one which shall receive the greatest number of votes be taken as the site for a Lodge, whereupon it appeared that Mr. Peck's lot received the greatest number of votes."

The next week—February 22d, 1833—the Lodge met and "the brethren were formed in procession and marched to the Methodist church, where an eloquent and feeling address was delivered to them by Brother R. L. Kennon; from thence they proceeded to laying the corner stone of the new lodge, which being performed with appropriate ceremonies, they returned to the lodge room."

The Masons participating in the dedicatory services were: J. S. W. Hellen, John Fife, V. T. Shell, John Cocke, Henry Webb, R. Shackleford, C. Jones, C. H. Cox, S. W. Webb, J. P. Hill, J. B. Scott, W. T. Scott, N. Pinkham, G. Goodrum, C. F. Stephens, John Craig, W. Earby, W. S. Harrison, Messrs. Noel, Halbert, Whiting, Stewart, Ocheltree and Garrett all of Lafayette Lodge; and visiting brethren R. L. Kennon, Thomas S. Abernathy, William Craig, James A. Beal, T. F. Moody, John Nelson, Joseph B. Stickney, J. Middlebrooks, J. Downing, James Chambers, J. E. Frierson, F. J. W. Nelson, T. Goodrum, W. D. Baldwin, J. D. Cash, Willis Nall, John P. Lipscomb, John McGinnis, O. Eddins, A. McMillan.

At the meeting of the Lodge on September 16th, 1833, the following motion was passed:

"Resolved that the site agreed on for the location of a lodge room be rescinded, and that a committee of three be appointed to circulate subscriptions for the purpose of raising sufficient funds to build a Lodge Room on the top of Mr. Dickens' house; when brothers Cocke, Hellen and Webb were appointed."

This committee did not progress as rapidly with their work as did the first one appointed to select a site, for it was not until February 17th, 1835, that Mr. Dickens made the Lodge the following proposition:

To the Members of Lafayette Lodge at Greensboro:  
Gentlemen:-

"Having had a conversation with some of the members of your body on the subject of building a lodge room on my lot lying east of the Warrior House, I take this method of making you the following proposition:

I will erect a building of the same size of the one you now occupy on the street leading from Main street to Mr. Peck's family residence (Peck's residence was the W. W. Powers homestead) on the same terms that the one you now occupy was built, without the restriction that was laid on it. The lower room of the building is to be constructed so as to make a good Town Hall, and to be appropriated to that purpose, provided the citizens of our town will pay for it, if not, to be owned by myself. I am also willing to make a good title to the upper story on its being paid for, or to the whole building if the Lodge, or citizens, will pay the cost of the same, without any charge for the ground on which it stands; the room now occupied as a lodge room to be retained by the Lodge until the new one is finished, without any charge for rent, and then to be given up to me. I am, Gentlemen

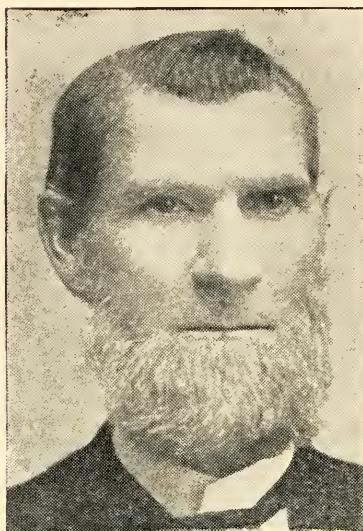
Yours with respect,  
Robert Dickens.

N. B. It will be understood that I will make good all the expense the Lodge has been at in furnishing a part of the materials for building the present Lodge room."

This proposition was accepted and Dickens built the lodge room now occupied by the Masons of Greensboro. The amount paid Dickens was \$629.54, this being ordered paid at the communication held on September 15th, 1835. In the month of April, 1837, a bill from C. Jones was presented "for work in building the Masonic Hall." The amount of this bill was \$460.64. This was nearly two years after the payment to Dickens. The minutes disclose nothing further on the subject.

The career of Lafayette Lodge has been a long and honorable one. Many distinguished men have been numbered among the membership. Scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land are those who have been within the precincts of its Hall and have taken part in the Masonic work.

It has a present membership of forty-five.



DR. THOMAS R. WARD.

He was for twenty-two years Worshipful Master of LaFayette Masonic Lodge

The following is a complete list of those who have filled the position of Worshipful Master since the organization of the Lodge in 1826:

Josiah Downing, 1826; Franklin Shaw, 1827; Wm. S. Chapman, 1830; J. B. Scott, 1831; John Craig, 1832; J. S. W. Hellen, 1833; John Fife, 1834; Daniel H. Bingham, 1835; Charles Whelan, 1836; Robert B. Waller, 1837-38-39; Volney Boardman, 1840; Robert B. Waller, 1841; Wm. Kerr, 1842-43; Robert B. Waller, 1844; Thomas Capers, 1845; Wm. Kerr, 1846; Thomas P. Chilton, 1847; Wm. Kerr, 1848-49-50; Robert H. Jackson, 1851-52-53; R. D. Huckabee, 1854-55-56; Thomas R. Ward, 1857-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69, 1871-72-73-74-75, 1880, 1886-87, 1894; Wm. Trice, 1870; John S. Tucker, 1876-77; Richard Inge, 1878-79; L. J. Lawson, 1880-81-82-83-84;

Elisha Young, 1885-86. (Note—From March, 1887, to June, 1890, there was a suspension of the Lodge. On June 17th, 1890, T. R. Ward, E. Young, R. U. DuBois, L. J. Lawson, B. Steinhart, J. P. Lieser and J. H. Young met, and under a dispensation of the Grand Secretary, elected officers.) L. J. Lawson, W. M., 1890-1891; John H. Turpin, 1892-93-94; D. P. Christenberry, 1895-96; J. A. Ellerbe, 1897-98; William Smaw, 1899-1900-01-02-03-04-05-06; L. J. Lawson, 1907.

It will be noted that Dr. Thomas R. Ward served as Worshipful Master twenty-two years,—the longest in point of service of any of the Worshipful Masters.

Wm. E. W. Yerby has served the Lodge as Secretary for fifteen consecutive years, i. e., from 1893 to 1908—the longest period ever served by any Secretary during the eighty-three years of its existence.

#### ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER.

Phoenix Royal Arch Chapter No. 11, under dispensation, was organized April 16, 1838, at Greensboro, Ala., with the following members:

Charles Whelan, H. P.; J. B. McVinoy, King; John Fife, Scribe; Henry Webb, C. of H.; R. Haygood, P. S.; W. D. Baldwin, R. A. C.; R. B. Walthall, Charles Briggs, A. B. Winn, M. of Veils.

A charter was granted by the Grand Chapter dated December 6, 1838, and was forfeited in December, 1876. The following are the names of the High Priests:

Charles Whelan, 1839 to 1844; Rev. Thomas Capers, 1845; Charles Whelan, 1846; William Kerr, 1847 to 1848; Volney Boardman, 1849; William Kerr, 1850; Francis M. Peterson, 1851 to 1859; William Kerr, 1860 to 1865; N. T. Lupton, 1866 to 1867; Thomas R. Ward, 1868; N. T. Lupton, 1869; Reuben H. Jackson, 1870 to 1872; Francis M. Peterson, 1873 to 1874.

A dispensation was issued August 29, 1902, to the following Companions to organize a new Royal Arch Chap-

ter in Greensboro, to be known as Phoenix Chapter No. 121:

John M. P. Otts, Jr., H. P.; William Smaw, King; John G. Apsey, Sr., Scribe; Lee M. Otts, John G. Apsey, Jr., A. C. Jones, George Findlay, R. U. Dubois, H. T. Waller. After the organization of the Chapter other members were: J. D. Hamilton, Wm. E. W. Yerby, T. G. Jones, John A. Straiton, Richard Muckle, Henry A. Andrews, George Delaney, N. L. Castleman, Chas. E. Waller, E. P. McCollum.

In December, 1907, Phoenix No. 121 forfeited its Charter.

#### KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS.

Eureka Lodge No. 29, Knights of Pythias of Greensboro, was chartered by the Grand Lodge of the State of Alabama on the first day of April, 1880.

The following are the charter members: Mayer Frank, S. Markstein, Abe Frank, Henry Beck, S. M. Marx, J. L. Levy, A. H. Williams, J. Friedlander, P. N. Booker, R. Inge, L. J. Lawson, J. B. Coleman, A. B. Loveman, J. M. Shivers, A. I. Klein and M. W. Redus.

The Charter is duly signed by George F. Taylor, Grand Chancellor of the State of Alabama. The charter members at once went industriously to work to build up Eureka Lodge No. 29, and the membership has at times been as high as one hundred.

Eureka No. 29 has never owned its lodge room, but has rented quarters from various parties. The first lodge room was the upstairs over the hardware store of George Findlay,—now occupied as The Watchman office. The meetings were held there for a number of years, and then the Lodge rented other quarters from M. Steinhart, upstairs in the building immediately in the rear of the Steinhart store. After remaining there for a term of years, J. A. Blunt built a room in the third story of the Opera

House building especially for Eureka Lodge, since which time the meetings have been held therein.

The present membership is about fifty.

#### THE ODD FELLOWS.

On February 24, 1845, George W. Freiderick and five others, applied for and obtained a Charter to establish a lodge of Odd Fellows in Greensboro, and on the 1st of March, 1845, Grand Chaplain Williamson came to Greensboro and instituted Lodge No. 8, I. O. O. F. It prospered for a time, and then the Charter was forfeited. There has been no lodge of Odd Fellows in the town for many years.



JEFFRIES A. BLUNT.

## Chapter XVI.

### MODERN GREENSBORO.

Any history of modern Greensboro with J. A. Blunt omitted, would resemble the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out, for no more progressive and enterprising man ever resided in the town,—nor one who took more pride in the advancement of everything that tended to the up-building of the place. His name is identified with many of the most substantial improvements that have been made of recent years.

Jeffries A. Blunt is the son of the late E. A. Blunt and his wife Mary Francis Hall Blunt, and was born in Marion, Alabama, on the 5th day of December, 1861. At the age of thirteen years—1874—he came to Greensboro and clerked in the general merchandise store of A. S. Jeffries for three years, at the expiration of which time he entered the employ of James W. McCrary, as a clerk in his store. He held this position for ten years, when he and M. M. Avery entered the mercantile business, buying out A. S. Jeffries, the style of the firm being Avery & Blunt. In 1894, upon the organization of the Bank of Greensboro, Mr. Blunt was elected as Cashier, which position he held until 1896, when he was elected as President of the institution, which position he has filled since that time to the present with marked ability and success.

Mr. Blunt served for a dozen or more years on the Town Council, and it was largely through his efforts that the cemented sidewalks were put down in the business portion of Greensboro, and also that the Main Street was cherted from the depot to the cemetery.

The reader will find, in perusing this volume, that Mr. Blunt's name is connected with a number of Greensboro's enterprises, and many of the principal buildings.

In 1897, Mr. Blunt erected a two story brick structure filling the space on the south side of Main street between the Steinhart building and the Dorman stores. In the upper story he fitted up a pretty Public Hall, and the building was given the name of the "Opera House Block." This structure was burned to the ground on the night of Nov. 24, 1902, as were also the Dorman stores. It was the most disastrous fire in the history of Greensboro, the losses footing up about \$70,000. In 1903, Mr. Blunt replaced the burned stores with the present handsome building—the most imposing ever erected in the town. The same year, Mr. C. A. Ramsey rebuilt the Dorman block, the present handsome stores being the result. In this block has been conducted since 1847, the Stollenwerck drug store, which was established in that year by Alphonse Stollenwerck, who died in Greensboro on August 11, 1900. Since his death, the business has been conducted by his sons. Mr. Stollenwerck was an honored and much respected citizen of Greensboro for more than half century.



MAIN STREET OF GREENSBORO  
Looking West from the Methodist Parsonage.



BLUNT'S OPERA HOUSE AND THE DORMAN BLOCK.

#### FIRST HOUSES BUILT AFTER THE WAR.

It would be superfluous to state that for nearly twenty years after the close of the war between the North and South that enterprise and progress were unknown quantities in the smaller towns of this section. The people were disheartened, and had to adjust themselves to new conditions—conditions that were hard, and seemingly unbearable, for they were so different from those to which they had been accustomed.

It was not until the year 1884 that there was a semblance of building of new stores or residences in Greensboro. The sound of the hammer and the saw had been unknown for nearly a quarter of a century. But in 1884, S. H. Lawrence built the little wooden store house on the south side of Main street now occupied by Wynne as a beef market. He soon afterward erected a cottage on the

lot on which is now situated the handsome home of Thomas R. Ward, Jr. A few years prior to this, Col. L. J. Lawson built his present residence on Tuscaloosa street.

The building spirit was soon caught by others, for in the early part of 1886 the residence of Mrs. W. D. Lee on Demopolis street was erected, and that of Prof. F. M. Peterson on Main street,—now owned by Thos. H. Jones.

Up to this time no building had been done in Greensboro worthy of note—indeed, so strange a thing was the erection of a house, that the writer recalls that as he was passing one of the structures mentioned above while it was in course of building, that a little girl asked him what the men who were at work on the residence were doing, and when informed that they were building a house she said: "Well, I declare! I thought that when God made the world He made at the same time the houses the people live in."

Other improvements begun to be made, and Greensboro was progressing well until the "Birmingham boom" broke in full force upon the citizens, not only of Greensboro, but of Hale county as well. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were carried there and invested—the buyers of real estate hoping to become immensely wealthy. Some of them did well—many others did not, but lost heavily when the inevitable crash came, and prices of real estate shot downward, the winds of adversity seeming to blow untempered upon the "shorn lambs."

The large amount of money taken from Greensboro to Birmingham during 1886 and 1887 almost put a stop to the progress of the town in the matter of new buildings for several years.

However, in 1887, Capt. S. T. Taylor moved to Greensboro from Mississippi, and purchased what was then known as the Scarff corner, at the intersection of Tuscaloosa and Main streets, and upon it he built the first brick store (possibly the one which W. W. Overstreet now owns and occupies being excepted) that had been

built for forty years or more. J. S. Buchanan was the contractor at the price of \$10,000. This only applies to the two story building on the corner—for the two stores immediately east of and adjoining this one were built by James W. McCrary in 1890.

In 1891, T. R. Ward & Son removed the small wooden building on Main street which Dr. T. R. Ward had occupied as an office for many years, and erected the present brick structure. The same year, G. W. Dugger added a story to the Greensboro Hotel.

Morris Steinhart in 1894 tore away the wooden building in which J. W. McCrary did business for many years, and erected two brick stores and a brick warehouse on the site.

In 1895, the colored Baptists begun the building of a large brick church on "Baptist Hill." The work, while at present well under way, has by no means been completed. The same year, W. E. Torbert built his present brick livery stable. Dr. A. Lawson also remodeled his bank building.

In 1897, J. A. Blunt erected a two story brick store now owned and occupied by P. F. Osborn.

In December, 1896, the building on Main street known as the old Christian Hotel, was destroyed by fire. It had been standing since about 1829, and was at one time regarded as among the finest two story bricks in the town. It was for a long while kept as a hotel by Mrs. Christian, a saintly woman, whose memory is yet kept alive by the older inhabitants. She was the mother of Judge W. C. Christian and of Mrs. L. W. Turpin, now of Greensboro. In 1898 Mrs. W. C. Tunstall, who owned the property, had the present one-story brick stores erected on the site of the old hotel building.

In the old days there formerly stood a brick building where the Johnson-Winn Millinery establishment now stands known as the "Mansion House," which was kept as a hotel for a few years by the late Col. John G. Har-

vey. While it was under his charge, sometime about 1843, the building fell, wrecking nearly everything on the interior and killing a jeweler named Munn.

In 1898, Benners and Jack removed the small wooden structures on Main street formerly occupied as law offices, and erected the two-story brick structure just east of Dr. Lawson's property. The same year Ed. deGraff-fenreid built the two-story structure at present occupied by Gulley & Christian.

In 1899, Tutwiler & Jones removed the wooden buildings on the corner east of the Benners & Jack building and erected the two-story brick that stands there at present.

In 1900, S. P. Stickney, who had purchased the L. Lawson property on Main street, removed the wooden structures standing thereon and erected the brick store occupied by F. F. Whittle, and also the one immediately east of it. This was the last wooden structure on the north side of the business portion of the town.

The passing of the old Lawson store recalled the memory of one of the noblest, sweetest-spirited Christian gentlemen that ever resided in the town—Lewis Lawson, the father of Dr. A. Lawson and Col. L. J. Lawson. He came to Greensboro from England, and for many years conducted a successful mercantile business here. In all good works he was foremost, and was true to every responsibility of life. Mr. Lawson died in Greensboro in December, 1881, honored and respected by those among whom he had resided for so many years. It was through his kindness of heart that Greensboro was indebted for another most excellent citizen—Richard Andrews, also from England. Mr. Lawson met Andrews, a wandering waif, in Mobile, and brought him to Greensboro and gave him employment in his store, where he remained until he was, in 1868, given the position as clerk of the Probate Court of Hale county, which position he filled with great credit until his death in January, 1907.

In the earlier days of his life, Mr. Andrews followed the sea—being a sailor on a lumber ship that plied the ocean. The wind never blew angrily that it did not recall to his mind his life as a sailor lad. There was one incident that was impressed indelibly upon his memory. While a severe storm was raging and the waves were running mountain-high, just as a sailor who was high up on one of the masts unloosing sails, uttered a frightful oath, a great gust of wind, more severe than any that had blown, swept him from the mast out into the angry waters. His body was never recovered. The thought of this poor fellow being ushered into eternity with that awful oath upon his lips always made this good man shudder.

In 1902, Dr. S. C. Carson erected his Sanitarium, and A. M. Tunstall built his law office.

In 1902, John A. Straiton established his manufacturing plant in Greensboro, where is turned out numerous articles for building and furnishing houses.

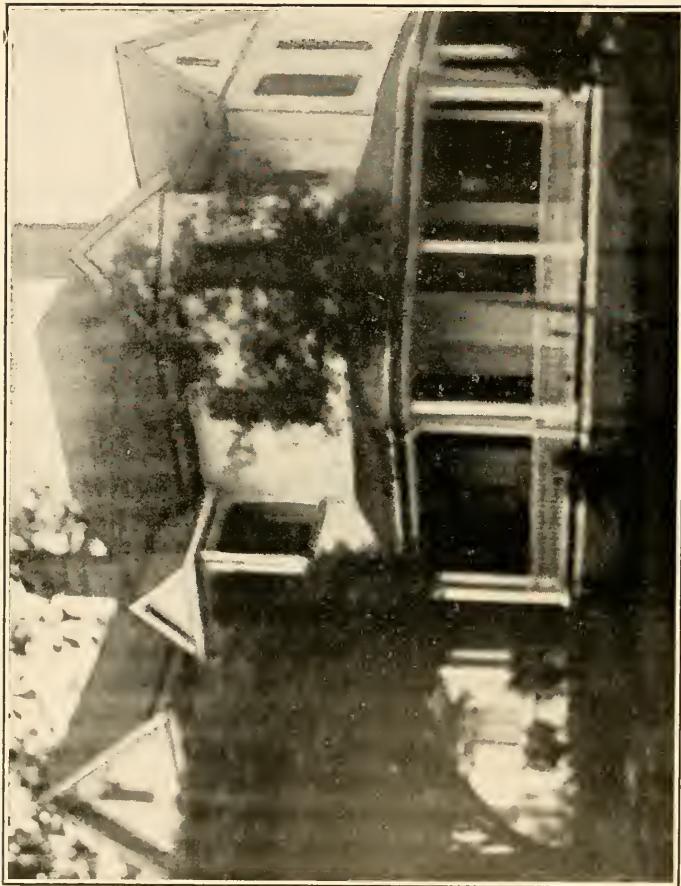
In 1904, M. D. L. Moore built the livery stable and three stores on the south side of Main street at the intersection of Tuscaloosa street.

In 1906-7, J. A. Blunt greatly improved the Greensboro hotel, and also, a few years previous to this time, erected the building now occupied as the Postoffice, and also the offices immediately to the south of this building, practically opening up a new business section of the town.

The brick structures in Greensboro not mentioned as having been erected since the war have been standing so long that no present inhabitant remembers when they were built.

A very large number of handsome residences have been erected during the past twenty years, and the town has steadily progressed.

Greensboro is situated in the heart of a fine agricultural country, and while it may never become a very large city, it will always maintain a degree of prosperity proportionate to the success of those who cultivate the farms.



RESIDENCE OF THE AUTHOR, on Tuscaloosa Street.

## Chapter XVII.

### WATER WORKS.

It is a far cry from "the old oaken bucket that hung in the well" to a modern system of water works, but that is the distance Greensboro has traveled. In the early days, the citizens were entirely dependent upon the water drawn from wells by means of rope and bucket for their supply. The business portion of the town was furnished from a couple of wells—one of which was located in the exact center of the Main street where it is intersected by Tuscaloosa street, and the other was in the center of Main street where it is intersected by Market and Postoffice streets.

As the town increased in population, these wells were found to be badly situated and were filled in, and three others dug in their stead,—one on the edge of the sidewalk on the south side of Main street nearly opposite the Powers store; one on the edge of the sidewalk on the north side of Main street at the southeast corner of the Greensboro Hotel, and the other on the south side of Main street on the edge of the sidewalk northwest of the Court House. These wells were supplied with pumps, instead of buckets, in 1874, and the citizens considered that quite an advance in the line of progress had been made. This method of obtaining water was continued until 1893, when a complete system of water works was inaugurated by Charles E. Waller, Esq., and the wells were filled up, and are now parts of the sidewalk.



HON. CHARLES E. WALLER.

He established the Greensboro Water Works System.

The first steps toward obtaining water works was made by the town authorities in 1890, when, with the object in view of obtaining an overflowing well of artesian water, they contracted to have one bored. The work was begun that year, and continued for about eighteen months on a lot which is now covered by the southwest corner of the Court House.

Just here it is worthy of note that one day, just as the workman had wearily picked through about twenty feet of rock at a depth of 520 feet, his auger suddenly dropped a distance of 15 feet, and the water in the piping that had for a month or more stood at a depth of 48 feet from the surface, receded to a depth of 110 feet. From these facts it was decided by those who know much of geology, that it was an underground river fifteen feet deep that had

been struck. The iron casing was, after a time, forced through the gap, and the work of boring continued until a depth of 890 feet was reached, when the workman broke off his drill, and after many vain efforts to remove it, the well was abandoned, after an expenditure by the town of about \$5,000.00.

Somewhat discouraged, but not entirely disheartened, by the first failure, the town authorities decided to try again, and put the workman to boring in the bottom immediately south of Main street where the Water and Light Plant is now located. They were successful here, for in a few weeks, at a depth of 432 feet, a bold stream was struck that overflowed gently. Another well was bored near this one, and at the same depth the same stream was struck. The cost of the two was only \$550.00.

Not wishing to undertake the "Municipal Ownership" problem, the Mayor and Council contracted with Charles E. Waller, Esq., to take the wells, and he at once proceeded to establish a system of water works. Mr. Waller paid the town \$1200.00 for the last two mentioned wells and a couple of small lots adjacent. He was granted a franchise for a period of thirty years from 1893,—the franchise to be renewed and extended another thirty years at the expiration of the first period should he or his successors and assigns choose to renew the contract, and the terms of the contract having been faithfully complied with by the party of the second part.

Mr. Waller continued to own the Water Works until the year 1900, when he disposed of the property to James E. Webb of Birmingham.

#### ELECTRIC LIGHTS.

Greensboro, from its foundation up to the year 1883, never knew what it was to have even a street lamp. Looking at the matter now, it appears inconceivable that the citizens should have allowed the streets to remain in total darkness after nightfall for about 65 years,—but such

is the fact, for it was not until 1883 that W. W. Powers appeared before the Mayor and Council and presented a petition signed by eighty citizens and tax-payers praying that body to erect twenty street lamps at convenient places on certain streets of the town. The petition was granted, and the lamps were, in a few months, placed in position. In 1885, the number of lights was increased to thirty. Mr. Powers was among the most sterling, progressive and successful business men of his day.

In December, 1899, the Mayor and Council granted James E. Webb of Birmingham, the privilege of erecting and operating an Electric Light Plant in Greensboro, and in 1900 the kerosene lamps that had been on duty for seventeen years were put out of commission, and their places supplied with arc lights,—twenty-three in number.

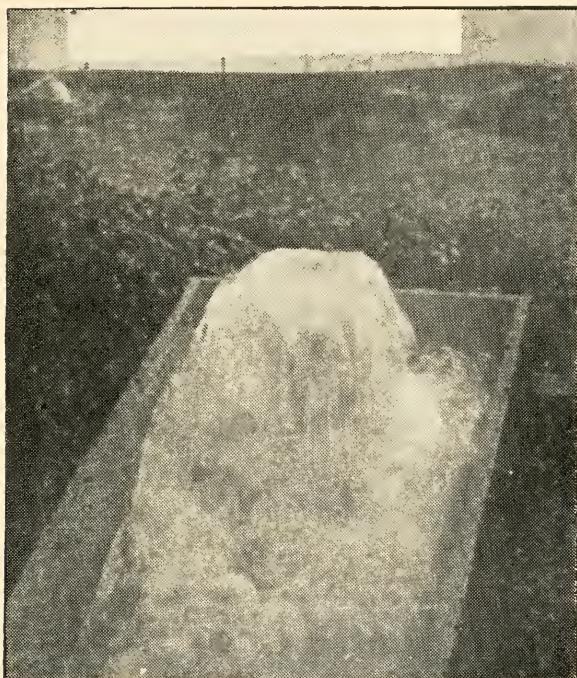
Mr. Webb purchased the Water Works of Charles E. Waller in 1900, and combined the Electric and Water Works Plants,—the combination being styled “The Greensboro Water and Light Company.”

Mr. Webb continued to own and operate the plant until 1904, when it was purchased by J. A. Blunt and associates, by whom it is now owned and operated.

The present steel water tank was erected in 1905, and has a capacity of 80,000 gallons. Its extreme height is 136½ feet.

#### ARTESIAN WELLS.

While a number of unsuccessful attempts have been made to get overflowing wells in Greensboro proper, yet a few miles south, and also west, of the town there are many of these wells—some of them furnishing great quantities of water. There is one located twelve miles southwest of Greensboro on what is known as the “Goodrum Place,” that possibly furnishes a greater amount of water than any other in the United States. It is ten inches in diameter, and the water gushes out of the earth from a depth of six hundred feet in such volume that a sufficient quantity is furnished to run a grist mill, cotton ginnery,



ONE OF THE LARGEST ARTESIAN WELLS IN THE WORLD

Situated ten miles Southwest of Greensboro.

cotton press and saw mill. It was bored in 1852 by Col. Samuel Pickens, and for over half a century it has continued to flow with imperceptible diminution in the quantity of water. To give an idea of the amount of water that is furnished by the well, it is only necessary to state that the trough around it is four feet across, and when the water falls back it fills the trough from side to side.

The grist mill, ginnery and saw mill run by the water from this well are situated on a hillside about a hundred yards away, and the water is carried to it by means of a canal cut in the solid limerock. Just under the mill house is a well three feet in diameter and forty feet deep. In

this, at a depth of twenty-five feet, is a turbine wheel, and the water from the canal is turned on when it is desired to put the machinery in motion. A tunnel from the bottom of this 40-foot well has been cut a distance of a hundred yards—ranging upward—and the waste water is turned into a branch. The accompanying picture gives some idea of the magnitude of this remarkable artesian well.

#### FIRE COMPANIES.

The first Fire Company organized in Greensboro was on the 28th of February, 1868, on which date a number of citizens of the town met in the old Franklin Hall and discussed the necessity of such an organization. R. H. Jackson was chairman of the meeting, and Dr. Jas. D. Osborne was secretary. After a thorough discussion of the matter, and the passage of a resolution to form "The Greensboro Fire Company," the following officers were elected:

A. E. McClure, President; Wm. G. Hafner, 1st assistant; N. P. Lawrence, 2d assistant; James D. Osborne, secretary; Thomas J. Seay, treasurer.

On December 16th, 1869, an Act was approved incorporating the Greensboro Fire Company No. 1, the corporate name being the "Greensboro Fire Company No. 1, of the town of Greensboro, Alabama." Those named in the body of the Act as incorporators are: L. J. Lawson, R. H. Jackson, George Breitenbach, E. T. Hutchinson, T. J. Seay and A. H. Benners. The following is a roll of "Greensboro Fire Company No. 1:"

L. J. Lawson, Foreman.	Briggs, S. G., Jr.
C. A. Ramsey, 1st Assistant.	Carson S. C.
Geo. Breitenbach, 2nd Assistant	Carson, P. K.
E. T. Hutchinson, Secretary.	Coleman, J. B.
Alex H. Williams, Treasurer.	Douglass, R. B.
Atkins, Jno. H.	DuBose, C. P.
Benners, A. H.	Fain, J. E.
Boardman, H.	Gayle, J. M.
Briggs, C. T.	

Hamilton, J. D.	Mellow, S. S.
Hooton, H. H.	Nelson, G. T.
Johnson, C. A.	Parish, E. T.
Johnson, W. P.	Roberts, W. W.
Johnson, Frank.	Seay, T. J.
Leiser, J. P.	Sharon, F. P.
Love, J. E.	Stockton, John T.
Loveman, A.	Tramill, S. C.
McDonald, Peyton C.	Williams, J. A.
	Wills, W. D.

“Phoenix Hook and Ladder Company” was soon afterward organized as an adjunct to the Fire Company, but lasted only a few years.

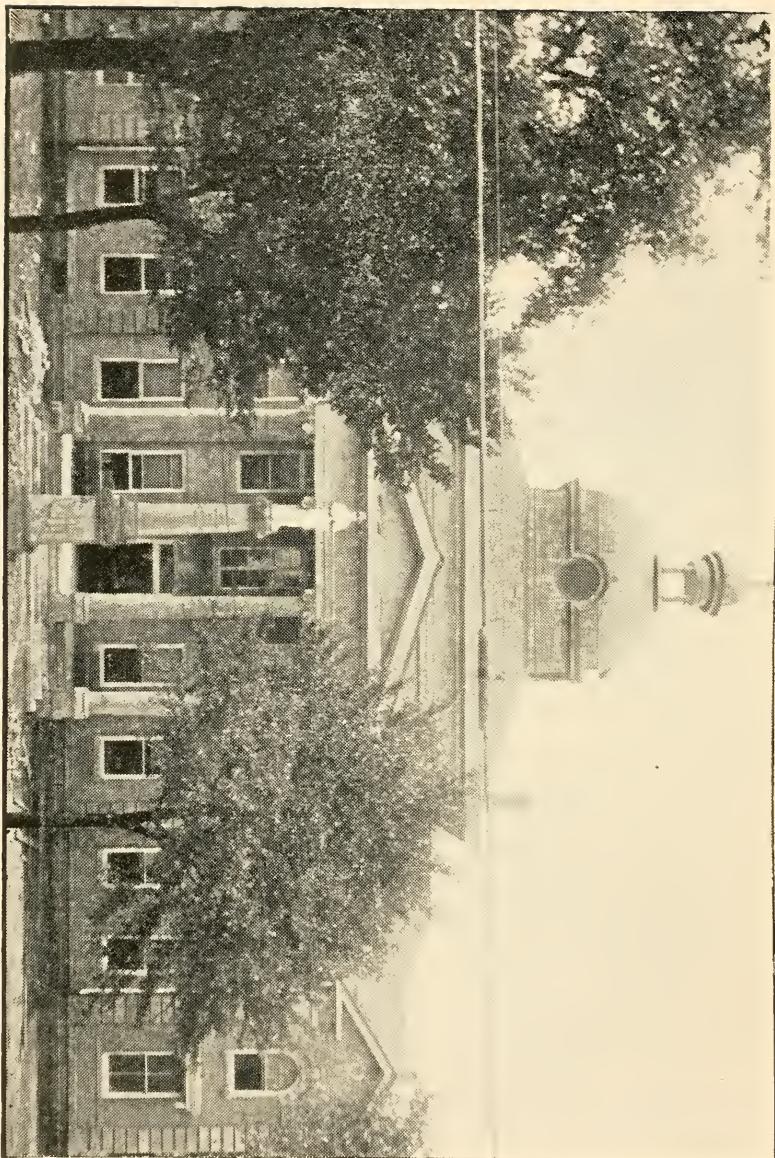
In 1893, the Fire Company of which the present is the successor, was organized, and the old Market House was set apart by the Mayor and Council as a fire house. It was overhauled and made a very suitable place for the storing of the fire apparatus. It is yet in use by the Company. The members of the present Greensboro Fire Company are as follows:

Chief—C. Y. Stollenwerck.  
Foreman & Secretary—N. L. Crabb.  
Treasurer—N. L. Crabb.

Members:

Otts, E. V.	Sledge, W. G.
Payne Walter.	Helton Robert
Reasonover, W. L.	Torbert, Edgar
Waller, C. E. Jr.	Wilson, W. C.
Davis, H. A.	Winn, Lee.
Otts, J. W.	Sledge, E. W.
Waller, A. E.	Seale, Walter.
Powers, A. J.	

HALE COUNTY COURT HOUSE—Erected in 1907-'08.



## Chapter XVIII.

### COURT HOUSE AND JAIL.



COL. STEPHEN F. HALE,

In honor of whose memory Hale County was named. He was a prominent lawyer of Greene County, Ala., residing at Eutaw, and represented Greene in the Legislature a number of terms. He was a soldier in the Mexican War, 1845, and made a brilliant record. He held the rank of Lieut.-Colonel in the Confederate war, belonging to the Army of Virginia. Col. Hale was killed in 1862 in one of the battles around Richmond.

On January 30th, 1867, the Legislature passed an Act creating Hale county. It was named for Col. Stephen F. Hale, a prominent and highly respected citizen of Greene county, from which latter county Hale was carved. The first election for county officers was held in March of the same year, and resulted in the election of Alfred H. Hutch-

inson as probate judge; J. E. Griggs, sheriff; James A. Tallman, circuit clerk (Mr. Tallman failing to qualify, the Governor appointed Volney Boardman to fill the position, which he occupied about 25 years); Ed. Nutting, tax assessor; Dan H. Britton, tax collector; I. F. Lewis, R. B. Allen, Burrell Johnson and A. S. Jeffries, county commissioners; P. T. Wright, justice of the peace, and Benjamin E. Dorman, constable.

At this election the question of locating the court house was submitted to a vote of the people. There were three candidates for the county seat, namely: Greensboro, Bucksnort, and Five Mile Church. The vote was as follows: For Greensboro, 570 votes; for Bucksnort, 280 votes, and for Five Mile Church, 124 votes. Greensboro received 166 majority over all, and was declared the county seat of Hale county.

Pending the decision of the voters on the question of locating the court house, the citizens of Greensboro pledged that in the event the citizens of Hale would put it in Greensboro they would furnish the county a court house and jail free of charge. This promise they kept, but it was the cause of considerable friction for several years in the town when the question of raising the money to pay for the buildings was brought home to the tax payers.

On the 13th day of December, 1867, the Intendant and Council of Greensboro purchased from the Alabama Baptist State Convention their church building, then known as "Salem Baptist Church," for the sum of \$8,000. The church stood where the present court house stands. The deed to the town to this property is signed by J. L. M. Curry and Charles Manley for the Baptists, and is witnessed by James D. Spiller and U. P. Walker.

On the 5th day of April, 1868, the "Intendant and Council of the Town of Greensboro," conveyed the property to Hale county, on the following conditions: "The use and right of property to the premises conveyed shall be and remain in the County of Hale so long as Greensboro shall

remain the county seat; but if at any time or in any event the said Greensboro shall cease to be the county seat of said county, and the purposes for which this deed is given should fail, then all right, title and interest in and to the said land and buildings conveyed shall revert to, and be vested in and belong to the said town of Greensboro, which shall then have the right to enter upon and take possession thereof."

The deed is signed by Amasa M. Dorman as Mayor, who by the way, was one of the most progressive and useful citizens of the town. He was Mayor of Greensboro for a dozen or more years and it was his pride to



THE OLD COURT HOUSE

Which was torn down in 1907 to make room for the present Court House. The middle portion of the old structure was formerly Salem Baptist Church.

beautify the streets of the town. To him Greensboro is indebted for the magnificent oaks along the Main street. He died March 20th, 1885, and is buried in the Greensboro cemetery.

Owing to dissensions of citizens in regard to the manner in which the Mayor and Council managed the court house and jail question, the Governor in December, 1868, removed the Mayor and Councilmen and appointed others in their stead. A special tax was levied upon the property in the town to pay for the court house and jail, and there was much dissatisfaction on the subject for some years.

It was not until September, 1871, that the present jail was completed and turned over to the county by the town. During the interim, the county used the calaboose of the town for a prison. It is still standing, a curious looking little two-room building situated almost in the heart of the city in the rear of the present fire house.

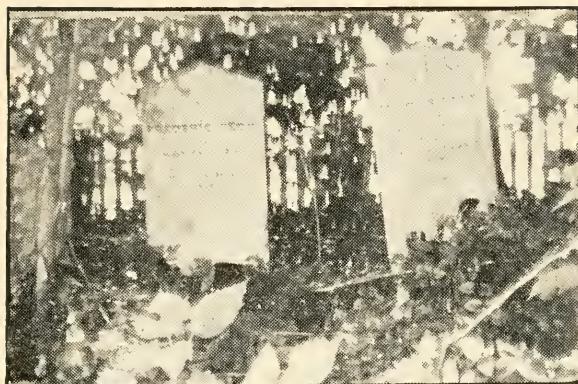
In November, 1905, the question of issuing \$30,000 worth of bonds by Hale county, to bear 5 per cent interest, for the purpose of constructing a new court house was submitted to the people, and the bond issue was carried. In November, 1906, the contract was let, and in January, 1907, work on the present court house was begun, and the building was completed in May, 1908. John A. Straiton was the contractor, his bid being \$44,767.19. It was found, before the contract was let, that the \$30,000 was not sufficient to build the structure, so the commissioners at their August, 1907, term instructed the probate judge to issue twenty county warrants for the sum of one thousand dollars each and to sell them and get the money with which to complete the building. This was done the October following. These warrants are being paid yearly at the rate of \$1,000 a year, and bear 6 per cent interest.

The first session of court held in the new structure was in April, 1908, Judge B. M. Miller presiding.

#### GRAVES AND GRAVEYARDS.

There are a number of scattered graves in Greensboro of which the present generation—most of them—know nothing.

On the eastern edge of the woods in the rear of the Otts residence are quite a number of graves, the dead of Troy being interred there. No tombstones are to be seen, but the graves are bricked up, and all that is known is, that beneath the sod repose the remains of some of the ancient settlers of this section—their names and their history being entirely obliterated.



GRAVES OF FREDERICK AND THOMAS PECK.

Among the first inhabitants of Greensboro.

There are also a number of graves in the rear of Dr. A. Lawson's residence—it being the burial place of the Pecks.

Here lie the remains of Frederick Peck, one of the earliest settlers of Greensboro, who was the first postmaster and among the very first merchants of the place. He died February 4th, 1846. Mrs. Eliza Peck is also buried here, she having died in April, 1863. Rev. Wm. S. Peck, formerly the pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Livingston, is buried here. He died in September, 1849. In this same enclosure are the graves of Mrs. Sophia Wemyss, who died in September, 1822, and Edwin A. Wemyss, who died in June, 1855. The Wemyss' were formerly very prominent citizens of this place. In the northwest corner of the little graveyard, solitary and alone, is a tombstone, bearing this inscription: "Abram Duff. Born April, 1790; died June, 1852." He was probably a relative of the Pecks or Wemyss', but not a soul could be found who remembered that he had ever resided in the town of Greensboro, though he supposedly lived here a long while.

In a clump of woods in the rear of Dr. R. H. Jackson's old homestead on Demopolis street, is the family graveyard of the Mays. In this lot is buried General Patrick May, who joined General Andrew Jackson's forces when they were in Alabama quelling disturbances with the Indians. He was a very brave soldier. At the battle of Burnt Corn, which was fought in 1813, Lieut. May and two other soldiers, became separated from the main body of the army while fighting with the Indians in a swamp. The savages were concealed in a dense canebrake, and the three men were battling with a large number of them. As the fight progressed, a tall, swathy warrior, more brave than his fellows, came out of hiding and leveled his gun on May, who also threw his into position. The weapons were discharged at the same instant. The Indian warrior fell forward a corpse, while May was uninjured, but the fire of the savage shattered May's gun near the lock. Being thus disarmed, he thought it best to retreat, and the three made a rush for their horses, but before reaching them one of the soldiers, Lieut. Girard W. Creagh, was shot down by the Indians, the ball entering his hip. He fell upon the ground, exclaiming: "Save me, Lieutenant, or I am gone!" Instantly, May wheeled around, ran to his fallen companion, raised him from the ground and bore him off on his back,—the Indians following rapidly. Reaching their horses, Creagh was placed on his animal, and May and the other soldier leaped into their saddles, and made off at full speed, soon joining the main body of troops from which they had become separated. May became a noted Indian fighter in the succeeding years. He died at his home in Greensboro—the red brick house on the hill to the east of Brick Springs—on April 5th, 1868, and was buried in the family graveyard. No tomb has ever been erected above his grave, and it is a mere matter of speculation which of the mounds of earth his remains lie beneath.

Many years after the happening at Burnt Corn, when

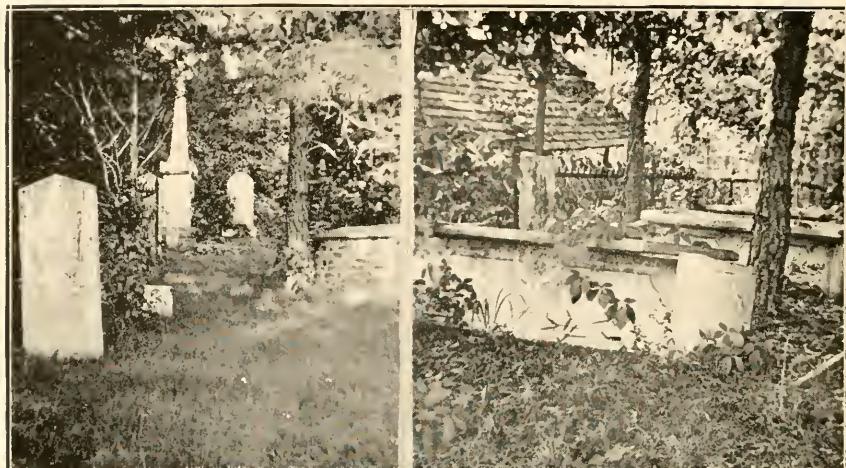
the young man whose life May had saved had married and his children were grown, a son of Creagn, having often heard the incident related above told by his father, resolved to see the man to whom his father owed his life. He came to Greensboro, met the General and his family, fell in love with one of his daughters, and they were happily married,—the Creaghs of Selma and Birmingham being the children of this marriage.

For more than half a century after the settlement of Greensboro, there were no public graveyards—all burials being made on private ground. The Stokes graveyard, in the northern suburbs of the town—where lie the remains of the older inhabitants, was never a public burial place. It was owned by private individuals, and the lots were bought from them.

When the question came up for the purchase by the town of Greensboro of a public cemetery, this place, of course, was under serious consideration by those who had the matter in charge. The land was of little value for cultivation, and was really worth only a nominal sum, but the owners, knowing the interest the public and the relatives of those who were buried there felt in the matter, demanded what was considered a most exorbitant price for the plat, which the town authorities refused to pay. Much bad feeling was engendered, which lasted for quite a long while—in fact, until all who had to do with the matter directly, needed for themselves a quiet resting place in a cemetery.

The present site, known as the Greensboro cemetery, was bought by the town, and the Stokes graveyard gradually came into disuse as a burial place. Only an occasional interment is ever made therein. It presents a very sad and dilapidated appearance.

In this old burial place repose the remains of the men and women who walked the streets of Greensboro when the town was young, and who owned the lands, the stores and houses for miles around. Their word was law in



View of a portion of the old Stokes Graveyard—taken June 28, 1908.

the old days. They established our churches and schools, directed the affairs of government, carried on the commerce, and put forth their best efforts for the uplift of humanity. But they lived in a period of the history of this section to which the present generation is a stranger,—amidst the dazzling splendors of the "old South," when men owned slaves by the hundreds, and were lords upon their large landed estates. The great majority of them passed from the stage of action years before the changed conditions (resultant upon the civil war) took place in the Southland. Their long sleep was undisturbed by the roar of cannon and the rattle of musketry as tremendous issues were fought out and decided in the bloody battles between the northern and southern troops nearly half a century ago.

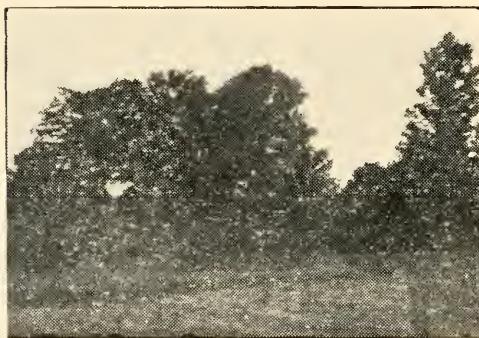
From the present appearance of the Stokes graveyard, it would seem that those who are buried there have been forgotten. Many of the tombs have toppled over, the

brick vaults have crumbled, and only gaping cavities reveal, in many instances, the last resting place of those over whom no tombs were erected. Brambles and briars run riot everywhere, and it is with difficulty one makes his way through the tangled mass of undergrowth in this old burial place of the long ago.

The following are the names of some of those who have rested out there on the hillside for many, many years,—names that are known far beyond the confines of Greensboro and of Alabama:

Robert Heywood McFadden, died 1858; John D. Moore, died 1849; Thomas M. Johnston, died 1863; Catherine, wife of Wm. A. Jones, died 1852; Mary Ellen, wife of Richard H. Lewis, and daughter of Louis A. Foreman, died 1840; Thomas H. Shackelford, died 1840; John R. Witherspoon, died 1852; Wm. T. Bryan, died 1827; Thomas W. Witherspoon, died 1836; Rev. Thomas S. Witherspoon, died 1844; Robert Franklin Witherspoon, died 1840; Rev. J. Hillhouse, died 1835; Elizabeth Stokes, died 1833; George M. Johnston, died 1834; James Johnston Huckabee, died 1854; James Huckabee, died 1851; George F. Huckabee, died 1851; Elizabeth Eddins, wife of Dr. D. Eddins, died 1850; Jesse Shivers, died 1845; Thomas Eddins, died 1850; Miles S. Wright, died 1843; John Locke, died 1848; Wm. S. Bird, died 1840; James Cowan, died 1844; William Alfred Locke, died 1845; Jane, wife of Squire Lowry, died 1840; Martha Stewart, wife of Larkin Stewart, died 1841; William P. Stewart, died 1843; Amanda F. Peterson, died 1858; Jane Byrd Page, died 1840; Dr. Elisha Young, senior and junior.

Eight miles to the westward from Greensboro, on the Tuscaloosa and Sawyerville road near the public thoroughfare, is a desolate and neglected graveyard in which are buried the remains of a number of the French refugees who came to this section of Alabama after the downfall of Napoleon at Waterloo. For years many of them lived in the neighborhood where the graveyard is located,



OLD FRENCH GRAVEYARD.

The trees shown in the picture have grown above the graves of a number of the refugees.

and died exiles from the land of their nativity. In a radius of five miles resided the Bayols, the Bordens, the Stollenwercks, the Maniers, the Baumgardiners and others. Manier was a school teacher, and the house in which he resided and taught the children of the past generation is still to be seen. The Roudets and the Gardins, and perhaps others over whom no tombs are now standing, are buried in the little cemetery, and some of them have been resting out there in the wide stretch of the prairies for more than seventy years. Huge maple trees have grown up on the graves of the quiet sleepers, and in the beautiful green foliage the mocking birds pour forth their sweetest songs throughout the day, and the silent stars keep watch by night above this last resting place of those who loved the great Emperor too well, and who paid the penalty of that devotion by filling an exile's grave in a land far away from bright and sunny La Belle France,—as did Napoleon himself on the lonely Isle of St. Helena.

## Chapter XIX.

### CLIMATOLOGY OF GREENSBORO, ALABAMA.

Greensboro is situated in the north-central portion of Hale county, Ala., in latitude  $32^{\circ} 42'$  north, longitude  $87^{\circ} 35'$  west, and at an elevation of 220 feet above the sea level.

The climatic record of Greensboro began in January, 1855, when the station was established by the Smithsonian Institute. Robert B. Waller, Sr., Capt. J. W. A. Wright and Prof. N. T. Lupton were observers at this station during the period from 1855 to 1888. The records were broken at intervals until January, 1888, when the station was established by the Signal Service—now the Weather Bureau—with Prof. M. H. Yerby as the observer. Prof. Yerby made a continuous record up to the time of his death in October, 1900, since which date his son, W. E. W. Yerby, has co-operated with the Weather Bureau in the capacity of observer.

The record shows the average temperature to be  $64^{\circ}$ ; the average for the winter,  $48^{\circ}$ ; spring,  $64^{\circ}$ ; summer,  $79^{\circ}$ ; autumn,  $65^{\circ}$ . The warmest year was 1891, with an average temperature of nearly  $66^{\circ}$ ; the coldest, 1857, with an average of  $61^{\circ}$ . The highest temperature recorded,  $105^{\circ}$ , occurred July 12, 1901; the lowest,  $5^{\circ}$  below zero, occurred February 13, 1899. The average maximum temperature is  $74^{\circ}$ ; the average summer maximum is  $90^{\circ}$ . The average minimum temperature is  $54^{\circ}$ , and the average winter minimum is  $37^{\circ}$ . The average number of days with maximum temperature above  $90^{\circ}$  is fifty-three; the average number of days with minimum temperature below  $32^{\circ}$  is thirty-three. The average date of the last

killing frost in spring is March 20th; the average date of the first in autumn is November 8th. The earliest killing frost of which there is a record occurred on October 24th; the latest on April 5th.

The precipitation record, while continuous since 1888 only, covers thirty-five complete years and shows the average annual amount to be 50 inches. The greatest amount recorded during any year was 68.98 inches in 1900; the least yearly amount was 35.67 inches in 1904. February and March are the wettest months, with an average of 5.42 inches; October is the driest month, with an average of 2.01 inches. The greatest amount of rain which fell during any one month was 14.81 inches, in May, 1903; the least monthly amount recorded was 0.08 inches, in October, 1904. The average number of days during the year with .01 inch or more of rain was 94.

The average amount of snowfall for the winter is 0.5 inch. The record shows, however, that snowfalls amounting to more than 4.0 inches occurred during February of several years, and that 10.0 inches of snow fell during March, 1900.

The prevailing direction of the wind is from the north during November to February, inclusive, and from the south during the other months.

The average number of clear days during the year is 191; partly cloudy days, 51; cloudy days, 123.

The following table shows the monthly and annual precipitation at Greensboro during the period in which the record has been kept:

PRECIPITATION.  
(In inches and hundredths.)

YEAR	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	AN'L.
1855.....	1.33	1.44	1.64	0.59	1.79	3.99	1.68	6.41	6.29	1.45	5.24	5.75	37.60
1856.....	3.52	2.60	6.16	3.95	5.23	6.37	1.91	2.75	0.58	0.44	12.79	5.73	52.23
1857.....	5.17	2.21	3.34	3.43	8.55	1.71	4.75	2.46	0.84	1.49	6.04	7.99	47.96
1858.....	9.29	3.58	3.15	4.55	3.26	1.11	0.91	3.88	0.14	2.67	3.19	7.84	40.57
1859.....	4.29	6.33	7.00	6.27	1.96	2.65	7.20	3.93	5.52	1.56	1.95	7.79	53.45
1860.....	2.16	6.13	9.91	2.63	1.41	3.35	4.06	11.61	3.90	4.52	7.77	6.36	54.81
1861.....	4.85	6.21	3.02	2.88	2.32	2.51	4.41	13.18	1.79	2.31	3.87	2.58	59.93
1862.....	8.39	9.76	5.12	7.16	1.29	1.74	0.36	1.00	4.44	0.58	0.53	3.09	43.16
1863.....	7.59	9.51	6.13	3.70	1.93	4.61	1.83	5.84	0.48	2.85	2.85	7.39	54.62
1864.....	2.45	1.75	9.15	2.47	1.74	1.32	7.73	2.04	3.84	6.79	4.30	6.31	5.20
1865.....	4.85	13.09	6.11	5.90	1.02	1.37	2.14	5.22	2.74	2.08	2.94	8.44	55.90
1866.....	3.05	7.05	2.73	7.38	7.36	6.31	3.06	5.22	2.74	2.13	4.41	3.78	55.22
1867.....	1.86	1.64	9.55	5.67	3.85	4.52	3.06	5.22	2.74	1.91	2.77	5.11	47.58
1885.....	8.94	3.33	2.92	3.17	5.88	4.00	2.51	2.23	1.84	1.37	7.32	5.33	48.84
1886.....	10.15	5.34	11.72	6.97	2.86	6.73	5.95	7.31	0.54	1.59	4.53	2.11	65.71
1888.....	4.38	4.38	11.20	2.16	2.35	4.14	3.37	9.29	7.93	4.40	3.13	2.15	58.88
1889.....	5.40	2.00	1.52	6.62	0.61	3.37	4.52	2.98	1.91	0.37	4.13	2.19	36.02
1890.....	3.42	4.50	5.65	3.16	2.68	5.38	1.46	8.98	0.91	1.15	3.37	45.24	
1891.....	6.75	8.15	8.86	1.75	2.02	3.61	4.82	0.31	1.70	0.23	5.17	5.03	48.40
1892.....	7.56	2.86	5.64	1.96	3.88	7.58	10.37	3.53	2.17	0.23	3.06	4.56	50.40
1893.....	2.42	8.46	3.36	0.88	11.85	3.10	2.20	7.72	3.12	1.28	3.22	5.30	52.91
1894.....	4.91	5.61	4.94	3.32	1.44	0.74	2.90	7.37	3.46	0.65	1.03	5.38	41.75
1895.....	8.70	3.37	4.60	2.76	3.94	4.32	2.76	5.64	1.67	1.25	1.61	3.91	46.36
1896.....	4.44	4.66	4.36	4.64	3.07	6.15	2.39	2.25	0.35	2.55	2.92	0.98	39.86
1897.....	5.74	5.70	6.54	4.24	1.09	2.23	6.61	3.70	0.74	1.96	2.73	6.05	46.33
1898.....	2.37	1.77	1.99	4.81	1.88	5.97	4.55	5.06	2.63	2.96	5.82	2.76	41.57
1899.....	6.44	6.17	6.74	2.74	3.19	2.39	4.43	1.89	0.50	0.87	1.75	6.02	43.13
1900.....	3.19	10.26	4.62	12.95	1.57	8.34	2.29	3.61	4.66	7.97	4.25	2.27	68.98
1901.....	4.34	4.58	5.23	6.28	6.09	2.24	3.09	5.63	4.02	0.25	2.59	7.63	51.97
1902.....	4.61	5.28	12.69	2.04	4.91	0.35	2.01	3.36	3.84	5.90	2.89	5.91	53.79
1903.....	3.50	9.27	4.22	1.31	14.81	5.84	3.67	4.09	1.17	0.85	0.54	3.03	52.36
1904.....	5.08	4.62	2.82	1.65	3.00	1.19	6.93	2.78	0.72	0.03	2.70	2.53	35.67
1905.....	6.98	7.20	3.43	4.21	4.13	2.91	2.23	9.31	1.80	4.40	1.43	7.56	55.49
1906.....	4.47	2.43	13.84	1.14	4.69	2.79	5.05	2.51	6.87	4.78	1.96	4.30	54.83
1907.....	2.37	5.27	2.92	9.71	8.75	2.61	6.83	2.39	5.74	1.50	5.13	7.02	60.24

Annual Average 50.15 1-5

Greensboro has been remarkably free from cyclones,—not one being on record for this station. The most destructive that ever visited this immediate section was on the night of January 21, 1904, when Moundville, a town in the northern part of Hale county, was struck by a wind of unusual severity. The great majority of the houses were swept away, and those left standing were badly damaged. Thirty people—six whites and twenty-four colored—were killed, and seventy injured, besides much stock and cattle were killed. Forty houses, the railroad depot, and seven freight cars were destroyed in less than a minute's time. The funnel shaped cloud swooped down upon the village about twelve o'clock, its course being from the southwest to the northwest. The property loss was estimated at about \$75,000.00.

The work of rebuilding the town was begun within a few days after the terrible calamity, and Moundville is now among the most thrifty and populous towns in Hale county.



MAIN STREET OF GREENSBORO  
Looking East from the Court House.

## Chapter XX.

### YELLOW FEVER.

Once in its history of nearly a century, Greensboro has been visited by yellow fever. It was in the year 1897, and the disease was in the town several months before the physicians officially declared it to be such. There were possibly some fifty cases from the middle of August till the 18th of November, and about a dozen deaths from that cause during the period. The trains were taken off the railroad the latter part of October, and were not run for a week or two. Provisions became scarce, and the inhabitants, many of them, were on scant rations when traffic was resumed. Even before the existence of the fever was announced by Dr. Elisha Young, there was a panic among the people, and many endeavored to leave for other points, but found that they were hemmed in on all sides,—all places having quarantined against Greensboro. Many went to the country and remained until after the disease was stamped out by the frost on the 18th day of November. Those who remained did what they could to alleviate the sufferings of the afflicted, attended the sick and buried the dead. Business was almost at a complete standstill during the months of October and November.

Many excellent citizens died during that year, and it will long remain a memorable period in the history of the town. In January, J. P. Lieser, Dr. J. M. Pickett and Mrs. Jane Buchanan died. In February, Miss Eliza Smaw and Charles A. Sheldon. In March, Alfred Drake and Wilkes Hanna. In April, Mrs. Katherine Randolph

and J. Pick Moore (near Greensboro.) In May, Capt. James M. Jack. In June, Mrs. John M. Martin. In August, little Mary Quitman Seed. In September, J. C. Dew. In October, John H. Young, James W. McCrary, Syd Johnson, little Elizabeth Ward, little Margaret Jones and Miss Ida Dorman. In November, Thomas Q. Smith, Shelby W. Chadwick, little Annie Parrish, little Lizzie Lawson, Dr. Thomas R. Ward, Mrs. Maria Williams and Frank Chadwick. In December, D. J. Castleman.

The death rate among the negroes was also unusually high during 1897.

#### A TRIPLE MURDER.

While the occurrence to be noted does not belong, strictly speaking, to the history of Greensboro, yet the citizens of the town were so wrought up over the matter, and the parties concerned were so well known here, that it is inserted as part of this volume.

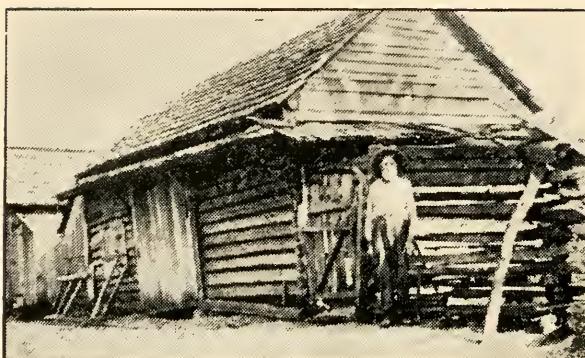
The night of December 1, 1897, was a cold, dark and dreary one. All day long a drizzly rain had fallen, and it was muddy and sloppy under foot, and the clouds were black and heavy overhead. It grew no better as night came on.

Sometime after the sun had gone down, Phelan Crawford left Greensboro to spend the night with his father-in-law—M. C. Hall—who resided about ten miles northeast of the town. Just before he reached John A. Singley's residence,—old Warren's store—eight miles out, the horses he was driving became violently frightened at some object on the roadside, and made a break to run. The darkness was so dense that Crawford could see nothing, but as his horses dashed up the hill in the blackness of the night, he thought he heard a deep groan coming from some one in pain or distress. It made his blood run cold—out there alone in the darkness and rain and stillness of the night. It was enough to make the stoutest heart quail with fear. He put whip to his already frightened

horses, and was soon at the place of his destination.

He was not long in telling his experience, and at once went out and gathered a number of the neighbors together, who resolved to go back to the spot where the deep groan was heard. They plodded on through the night and mud, back to Singley's home on the roadside. Arriving there they found that all was quiet and still within. Not a sound could be heard save the dripping of the rain from the trees and the rush of the wind as it passed through the boughs on towards the south. They continued their journey down the road about fifty yards, and to their horror they saw in the dim light afforded by a lantern, a sight to make one's hair stand on end—a man groping about on his hands and knees, groaning at every breath. They called to him,—but no answer came. They approached closer and saw that his hands and clothing were clotted with blood and besmeared with mud. They did not recognize the man at first, but a closer scrutiny disclosed the fact that it was John A. Singley, one of the most well-to-do and respected farmers of Hale county. They asked him what had happened, but he made no reply—only pointing to his throat. Then the men discovered that it was cut from ear to ear. They lifted him up and assisted him to the house. An attempt to open the front door disclosed the fact that it was locked. They hastily broke it in, and then the men fell back with exclamations of horror,—for indeed it was a ghastly sight that greeted their gaze. For a moment they stood paralyzed. There upon the floor lay Mrs. Singley in a pool of blood, her head crushed and her throat most cruelly cut, cold in death. But where was the little boy, the only child of the fond parents? The party searched further, and in an adjoining room they found the little twelve-year-old son, lying face downward, butchered in a most brutal manner.

Who did it? What could it all mean? The men had no idea that Mr. Singley would be able to throw any light on the mystery, but as he lay on the bed on which he



The old stable at the top of the hill. Singley had crawled a hundred yards up the road, and was found near the gate to the left.

had been placed, breathing hard and gasping for life, he beckoned them to come closer. They approached and began to ask him questions. They discovered that he was in possession of his mental faculties, and could make himself understood by signs and nods of the head. He was asked who had committed the crimes. He indicated the direction in which the guilty party resided by pointing up the road from his home. They called the names of several persons, but at each he would shake his head. Finally someone asked if it was Bill Scott,—a negro who lived three miles above him—and he nodded his head affirmatively several times most emphatically.

By this time, the cold gray dawn of another bleak December day began to show itself, and a large number of people had gathered—some from Greensboro, who had been notified soon after the discovery of Singley's condition.

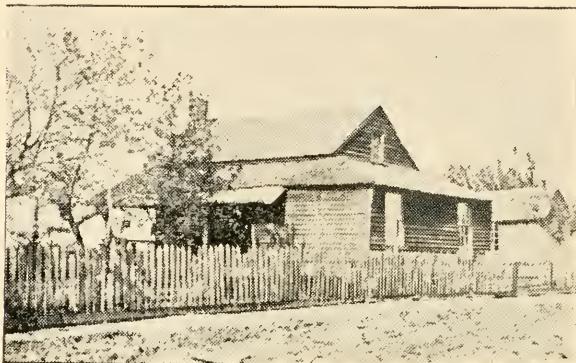
The suffering, dying man told all he knew of the horrible crimes. The full particulars—which developed later—are given as follows:

Bill Scott, a negro to whom Singley had advanced money and goods for several years, came to the house

some time after dark on the night of December 1st, and told Singley—who was sitting by the fire chatting with his wife and little son—that his (Scott's) mule had gotten loose, and asked him to please come out and help him catch it. Having known Scott for quite a while, and not for a moment suspecting foul play, Singley at once lighted a torch and went with Scott down the road. When they had gone about a hundred and fifty yards from the house, near the foot of the hill, Scott suddenly turned upon Singley, and at one stroke felled him to the ground with a heavy stick. He then took Singley's knife from his pocket and cut the throat of the prostrate man from ear to ear—severing everything except the jugular vein. He left his victim for dead, and hastily went to Singley's home, cautiously opened the front door, and as Mrs. Singley, who was sitting near sewing, looked up he struck her a blow on the head with the stick, knocking her from the chair, and then cut her throat, killing her instantly. The little son, who was sitting in the room with his mother, seeing her so horribly murdered, fled to the adjoining room, followed by the fiend, who brained him with the same cudgel he had used on his father and mother. He then cut the little boy's throat. Having committed these awful murders, he went to the bureau drawer, forced it open, and took therefrom seven hundred dollars—the object he had in view when he went to Singley's house.

After securing the money, Scott locked the front door, went out the back way, threw the key away, and returned to where he had left Singley on the ground, and thinking to be doubly sure of his murderous work, he cut another gash in his throat, and then went to his own home three miles up the road, and remained there until early next morning.

Singley lingered nearly all the next day after being so horribly butchered, but died when the evening shades began to gather.



THE JOHN SINGLEY HOME

Where Mrs. Singley and son were murdered.

It was a sad funeral cortege that left the once happy home of John A. Singley on Saturday, December 3rd. The hearses containing the coffins of father, mother and son, followed by a large number of friends and relatives, slowly wended their way over the hills and vales to the cemetery hard by the little Methodist church at Havana, and there, after a most touching funeral sermon, the remains of the three persons—an entire family—were deposited in one grave.

Officers and citizens were soon in pursuit of the murderer. His trail was followed all day Thursday and Friday. On Saturday he was captured by a negro man named Wes James at his (James') home, in Perry county, whither Scott had gone, and was driven to the house by hunger, little thinking that James had heard of the murder of the Singleys. In this he was mistaken, and soon after he entered the house, James leveled his shot gun on him and told him to consider himself under arrest. The prisoner was carried to the Perry county jail, and remained there for a short while, after which he was taken to Selma and lodged in the jail at that place—it be-

ing considered unsafe to bring him to Greensboro, so bitter was the feeling and so great was the excitement.

In a day or two after his capture, Scott confessed his guilt—or at least a part of it—and told that the money he had taken from the bureau drawer had been divided with other parties, but that he had gotten half of it, which he had hidden at a place he designated. A search revealed the truth of the statement, for exactly where he said he had put the money, three hundred and fifty dollars were found. Before his death, Singley told that the amount he had in the drawer was seven hundred dollars. The other half of the money was never accounted for.

Scott endeavored to implicate several other negroes in the horrible crime, but in every instance the accused parties were proven to have been elsewhere on the night the Singleys were killed.

The clamor for a speedy trial of the brute was so persistent that Judge John Moore ordered a special term of the circuit court of Hale county to try Scott, which was held January 19, 1898. He was brought from the jail in Selma a week or so before the day set for his trial, and the author of these lines and Edwin S. Jack, Esq., were appointed by the Court to defend him,—he being financially unable to employ counsel. The writer recalls that he had several conversations with Scott relative to the case, and he would talk freely about the murder of Singley and his wife, but when asked "What about the little boy, Bill," he would exclaim: "Oh, for God's sake, don't talk about that child!" And then he would swear that he didn't kill him,—that another man did that; that he loved the boy, and the boy was fond of him.

The day for trial arrived. The town was filled with people from far and near who wanted to get a glimpse of this human monster. Trouble was expected, and the Sheriff swore in a number of special deputies. But no disturbance occurred. The session of the court was ex-

tremely orderly. The prisoner was arraigned, the indictment charging him with the murders was read, and Scott entered a plea of guilty. After confessing his guilt, the jury returned a verdict of guilty of murder in the first degree and fixed the punishment at death. The judge told Scott to stand up, and asked him if he had anything to say why the sentence of the Court should not be pronounced upon him, and he replied "Nothing." Then the Judge sentenced him to be hanged by the neck until he was dead. Scott received the judgment of the Court without a tremor, and was hurried back to jail by the Sheriff and his deputies, where he was kept closely guarded until February 25, 1898, when he was brought forth and hung. His body was cut down and buried in the pauper's field at the expense of the county,—his family refusing to have anything to do with it.

And thus ended the blackest chapter in the history of this entire section, and the citizenship felt that the moral atmosphere was purer by the passing away of such a demon in human form.

## Chapter XXI.

### POSTOFFICE.

The postoffice at Greensboro was established in September, 1818, and during the ninety years of its existence there have been seventeen postmasters, as follows:

Frederick Peck, John Street, Sr., John Street, Jr., Herman Kohnen, Wm. M. Palmer, Al. Stollenwerck, J. C Simonds, Wm. Kelly, C. W. Hatch, Wm. H. Sanborn, Joseph Atkins, W. White Jones, James W. Locke, W. White Jones, G. W. Dugger, James M. Hobson, L. J. Lawson.

It was not until the middle of 1869 that it was made a money order office, the first postoffice money order being issued on July 14th, 1869, to D. F. McCrary for the sum of \$24.60.

The first rural free delivery route from the Greensboro office was established in 1906. There are at present three routes radiating from this point.

### *Truth Stranger Than Fiction.*

In the year 1872 there happened an incident in connection with the Greensboro postoffice that fully demonstrates that "truth is stranger than fiction," and further, that circumstantial evidence is very treacherous at times. The account of the incident about to be related was written by Judge Anthony W. Dillard, who held the first session of the Chancery Court of Hale county in Greensboro on the 11th day of July, 1869. Judge Dillard was a lawyer of ability, and was well known to the older citizens of Greensboro. The facts of the strange case given below were recalled to his mind by the death of Wm. H. Sanborn, which occurred at Village Springs, Ala., on November 24th, 1898, from the effects of a wound received from the accidental discharge of a shot gun. His remains were brought to Greensboro and buried in the cemetery here.

Charles W. Hatch is also buried in the same cemetery, he having died some years before.

The following is Chancellor Dillard's letter:

*Gainesville, Ala., Dec. 12, 1898.*

Dear Mr. Editor: I see you announce the death of Wm. H. Sanborn, former postmaster at Greensboro, Ala., and this induced me to forward to you a copy of the "San Antonio Light," containing an article from my pen concerning Mr. Sanborn, which you might re-produce if you think proper. The United States District Attorney gave me the facts recited, and that is all I know.

A. W. DILLARD.

As it may prove interesting to your readers, I have concluded to narrate a case in which a registered letter, containing the sum of \$1,950 in national bank notes, when it reached the party to whom it was addressed, in the city of New York, did not contain a single dollar. The seals on the letter were unbroken, and showed that the letter had never been tampered with while enroute.

The letter was registered in the postoffice at Greensboro, Ala., by Charles W. Hatch, the postmaster, and subsequently was placed in a mail pouch and locked, in the presence of Wm. H. Sanborn, Hatch's clerk.

Hatch kept the postoffice on one side of his store, in the front side of it. In 1872 he had Wm. H. Sanborn, a young man, aged about 20, employed as a clerk in his store and in the postoffice.

Young Sanborn ate at his mother's, but slept at night in the rear end of the store of Hatch, and had access to the mails and the matter in the postoffice, situated in the front part of the store.

When the registered letter was delivered to its owner, in the city of New York, and found to contain no money at all, the owner immediately telegraphed the facts to the postmaster general at Washington and requested that a postal detective be sent to New York. This detective was

sent at once, and Hatch, the postmaster at Greensboro, Ala., was notified by the postoffice department of the loss of the money contained in the registered letter.

Young Sanborn, on hearing of the matter from Hatch, made an affidavit to the effect that he was a clerk in the store of Hatch as well as a deputy postmaster; that the postoffice was in the store; that he saw Hatch count the money, place it in a registered envelope, seal it, put the same in the letter mail pouch and lock the mail pouch; that he knew of his own personal knowledge that Hatch did not after that re-open or touch the said mail pouch; that Hatch and himself left the store at sunset at the same time, and in company; that they walked together down the street a couple of hundred yards, to a point where they separated to go to their respective homes, which were on opposite sides of the town; that he (Sanborn) returned to the store immediately after getting his supper—slept in the store that night; that Hatch did not re-enter the store and the postoffice that night after they had quitted it in company, and that he delivered the mail pouches to the stage driver at the door at 3 o'clock, the morning following the placing of the registered letter in the letter pouch.

This affidavit exonerated Hatch, the postmaster, but it clearly inculpated young Sanborn, when supplemented by another fact disclosed by the moneyless letter when it reached New York. After abstracting the money the thief had placed several old papers in the registered envelope to represent the money in bulk, and among these was an almanac, on which was printed the name of a Greensboro druggist, who kept the patent medicine of the almanac make for sale. On the almanac was visible the name of the person in New York to whom the money in the registered letter had been sent, and this showed the almanac had been used as a blotting paper on the address on the registered letter. Of course, this had all been done in the postoffice at Greensboro, Ala., and, as

a matter of course, the robbery of the registered letter had taken place in the Greensboro postoffice. That was the only place where the almanac could possibly have been employed as a blotter on the registered package and then placed inside the registered envelope prior to its being sealed.

Young Sanborn was arrested by the United States marshal, carried to Mobile, Ala., and in default of bail lodged in jail. At the first term thereafter of the United States District court an indictment was returned into court against Sanborn for robbing the registered package of \$1,950. As he could not give bail, Sanborn remained in jail in Mobile. Hatch had been summoned as a witness before the grand jury and had appeared and testified.

Sanborn had been in jail a year. On the Monday preceding the day set for his trial, District Attorney Southworth told me that while at the dinner table at the Battle House he received a card requesting him to call at room twenty-three immediately after dinner as the writer desired to consult him on government business of an urgent character.

"I called at room 23," said the district attorney to me, "and was received by a gentleman, who informed me that the name on his card was his traveling name; that he was a detective in the postoffice department and had been for many years, and handed me his commission properly executed and avouched by the proper official seal. He then said, 'I am on my way to Galveston, Texas, to investigate a crooked transaction in that postoffice in reference to a registered money package, but was ordered to stop here and see about the Greensboro robbery of the money in a registered package.'

"I replied," said Mr. Southworth, "that it was entirely useless for him to do so, as the thief was in jail, would be tried and convicted two days later, and that the attorneys for the thief had already admitted their client's case was hopeless, and had entreated him, in considera-

tion of the previous good character and youthfulness of the culprit, to consent to the infliction of the lowest punishment."

The Detective: "I am paid a yearly salary, sir, and it is my rule to obey the orders of my superiors to the letter, and I wish you to allow me to see and examine the papers in the case. By the by, who is the party in jail for the Greensboro robbery?"

Southworth: "Young Sanborn, the deputy postmaster."

Detective: "Can you send to my room the papers in the case, Mr. Southworth? As I am a detective it is my duty and my business to prevent my real character being discovered; hence I do not care to examine them in your office."

"Certainly, I will send them to your room by one of the clerks in my office."

Detective: "Please call here at my room, Mr. Southworth, after supper."

Mr. Southworth sent the papers to the detective in room 23, and called on him immediately on quitting the dining-room the same evening.

"Mr. Southworth, you have the wrong man arraigned for the Greensboro robbery," said the detective.

"Nonsense, sir; the proof is perfectly conclusive. The man's own voluntary affidavit proves him to be guilty," replied Southworth in a tone of pique and irritation.

"Is Charles W. Hatch in the city," asked the detective.

"Yes, sir; he is one of the witnesses against Sanborn."

"Mr. Southworth, I wish you to send a note to Mr. Hatch to call at your office at 11 o'clock tomorrow, and I wish you to ask him the questions written on this slip of paper. I will drop into your office a few minutes after eleven as an entire stranger and tell you that I came from the north and am a stranger in the city, and ask if I can write a letter in your office. You will please place me at a desk or table where I can observe Hatch without

his being aware of it, and contrive somehow to get your clerk out of your office."

Southworth told me he followed out this plan to the letter; that at 11 o'clock the next day, Hatch entered his office, and he sent his clerk out to see a gentleman who lived some distance off, on a case in court. In a few minutes the detective entered and asked if he might write a letter and was placed at a table on one side of Hatch, but from where he could observe the countenance of Hatch.

"I then commenced asking Hatch the written questions," said Southworth, "telling him that, as Sanborn was to be tried the next day, I wished to fully understand what he (Hatch) could testify to on the trial. I had not asked him half the questions written on the slip of paper, when the detective arose and stepping in front of Hatch said to him:

"‘Charles W. Hatch, you are a thief; you stole the \$1,950 out of the registered package, and yet you have the baseness to come here and swear away the character and liberty of young Sanborn, whom you know to be innocent. You persuaded him to make the affidavit that exonerated you, but criminated him. You not only stole the \$1,950 out of the registered package, but six weeks before you stole \$830 out of another registered package. I am a secret agent in the postoffice department; here is my commission to prove my statement. I am occupying room 23 in the Battle House, and I tell you now, that unless you appear at my room this evening with a confession of your guilt in both cases, duly sworn to, and \$2,780 in cash, or your bill of exchange at thirty days accepted by a solvent business firm of this city, I will cause you to be arrested on both charges. It is a rule with the government, where a thief makes good what he has stolen prior to the institution of criminal proceedings against him, not to prosecute him, and you have until 3 o'clock this evening to refund what you have stolen, but don't

fail to appear at my room, No. 23, at the hour named."

"The detective," said Mr. Southworth, "turned on his heel and walked out of my office. I was utterly dumfounded at his remarks to Hatch, whose character and standing were first-class. And the other evidence against Sanborn was so conclusive! Hatch sat there in his chair, silent and astounded. At last he said, 'Mr. Southworth, did you hear what that man said to me?' I nodded my head by way of reply. 'What must I do about it, Mr. Southworth?' asked Hatch.

"I told him the charge against him was a calumny and that his character was his rock of defense, and to treat the threat of the detective with utter contempt and stern defiance. In a few moments Hatch withdrew and I saw him no more that day. At 3:30 o'clock, that evening, while I was dining in the Battle House, the detective passed behind my chair and requested me to come to room 23 when I left the dining room.

"I repaired to room 23, impatient to learn the result of the affair, and the detective placed in my hand the sworn confession of Hatch acknowledging that he had stolen both the \$830 and the \$1,950 out of the registered envelopes. In regard to the \$1,950 theft Hatch said Sanborn and himself did leave the store together but that after he and Sanborn separated, he waited until Sanborn had gotten out of sight and returned to the postoffice, to which he also carried a key. Entering the postoffice, he unlocked the mail pouch, took out the registered package, broke it open and withdrew the \$1,950, took another envelope similar to the one first used, placed in the almanac and some other papers, sealed it, addressed it exactly as the first one was addressed, placed it in the mail pouch and then locked it. The detective then exhibited to me the \$2,780 which Hatch had paid him. 'Now, Mr. Southworth, you must dismiss the case against Sanborn tomorrow, and state that circumstances have come to light which establish his innocence; that the real culprit has

confessed his guilt, and refunded the money stolen by him. I have written the facts to the postoffice department, enclosing the resignation of Hatch, and I have urged and recommended that Sanborn be appointed postmaster at Greensboro, as some reparation for his imprisonment.'

"I was amazed at this denouement," said Southworth, "and I asked the detective what proof he had of the guilt of Hatch. He said he reached New York on the first train after having been notified the letter had been robbed, and that the tell-tale almanac had given him a clue as well as directed suspicion to Hatch himself. He discovered that Hatch carried on a mercantile business in Greensboro, Ala., and was indebted to two merchants in the city of New York, so he went to see them in person and requested them in case Hatch should remit them money either by express or registered letter to apprise him of it immediately and not to open it until he was present. I also went to the express office and requested them to notify me should any money package from C. W. Hatch reach their office directed to A or B, and hold the package until I arrived. About a week after my arrival in New York to investigate the case, the Greensboro merchant who had remitted the \$1,950, forwarded to his merchant creditor a list of the bills, together with their numbers, which rendered identification an easy matter. After a few weeks, two money packages shipped from Newberne, Ala., by C. W. Hatch to his two merchant creditors in New York, arrived and I was notified by the express company; I went to the office and accompanied the express messenger who had to deliver them. When the two packages were opened they contained the identical bills taken from the registered letter. The size and the numbers tallied with those on the list forwarded by the Greensboro merchant, made prior to the sending of the money by registered letter. The two express packages contained the sum of \$830 over and above the \$1,950, which led

me to conclude that Hatch had also abstracted that sum from a registered letter from Greensboro, that was moneyless when it reached its destination."

Sanborn was appointed postmaster at Greensboro, Ala., and my recollection is he held the office on December 23, 1882, the day on which I left Alabama. This case will deserve a place among the cause celebre, and would have occupied it, had it appeared in the reports of adjudged cases. It suffices to make it highly probable, that innocent persons are so entangled in a web of circumstances as to be sometimes convicted and punished for crimes which they did not commit. The fall of Hatch, after leading an honest life for years, is an occurrence witnessed daily.

ANTHONY W. DILLARD.

## Chapter XXII.

### GOVERNORS OF ALABAMA.

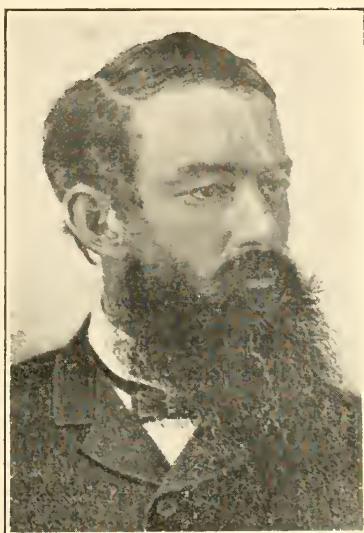
During its history, Greensboro has furnished the State of Alabama with three Governors.

ISRAEL PICKENS, who was Governor from 1821 to 1825, was a resident of the town. He was a member of the United States Senate at the time of his death, which occurred in 1827, on the island of Cuba. His remains were brought back to his old home, and are buried some three miles south of Greensboro.



JOHN GAYLE.

JOHN GAYLE, Governor from 1831 to 1835, was also a citizen of Greensboro. At the expiration of his term of office he removed to Mobile and practiced law until his election to Congress in 1847. In 1849, he was appointed as Federal District Judge in Alabama, which position he held until his death in 1858.



THOMAS SEAY,

Who was Governor of Alabama from 1886 to 1890.

THOMAS SEAY, Governor from 1886 to 1890, was born and reared in the old town. At the expiration of his term of office he returned to Greensboro and reopened his law office, and practiced his profession until his death on March 30, 1896, at the age of 50 years. He was an able, upright, conscientious, Christian statesman, and was an honor to Alabama and to the town of his nativity.

### OTHER STATE OFFICIALS.

HON. WILLIAM D. LEE filled the position of State Convict Inspector for some years just prior to his death, which occurred at his home in Greensboro on February 25, 1899. Many needed reforms were inaugurated, and others projected, in the convict system of Alabama during his term of office, for which he is entitled to much credit.

HON. WILEY C. TUNSTALL held the office of Associate Railroad Commissioner longer than any other man has ever occupied it. He went out of office in 1906, after filling the position for seventeen years. Upon returning to his home in Greensboro, he actively entered into the work of looking after his large landed interests in Hale county. He is a gentleman of great force of character and strong common sense, and has left his imprint upon the political history of the State. He continues to manifest a lively interest in public affairs.

### PROMINENT LAWYERS.

Greensboro has furnished some of the most eminent lawyers in Alabama. Among the number who formerly resided in the town may be mentioned John Erwin, William M. Murphy, John Gayle, Israel Pickens, James D. Webb, A. B. Pittman, Robert B. Waller, Augustus Benners, Henry Watson, Thomas Seay, Thomas R. Roulhac, Augustus A. Coleman, James E. Webb, James J. Garrett and others.



RICHMOND PEARSON HOBSON.

## RICHMOND PEARSON HOBSON.

The subject of this sketch was born in Greensboro, Ala., Aug. 17th, 1870. He attended school at the Southern University, and so brilliant was he that at the age of fourteen years he was able to pass successfully the competitive examination for entrance to the Naval Academy at Annapolis, from which institution he graduated at the head of his class in 1889. This latter distinction entitled him to go to Paris, France, for a course in naval construction, of which opportunity he eagerly took advantage. At the expiration of two years he returned to the United States and was engaged in the Naval Construction Department, and also at Annapolis as a professor, which position he was filling at the time of the breaking out of the war between this country and Spain in May, 1898.

Lieutenant Hobson asked, and was granted the privilege of joining his pupils to the American squadron, and he and his class were detailed to the New York, Admiral Sampson's flagship. When the Admiral decided to block the harbor of Santiago, Cuba, he asked for plans from the various officers. Hobson's was adopted, and after selecting six non-commissioned officers, viz: George Charette, J. E. Murphy, Oscar Deigan, John Phillips, John Kelley and Daniel Montague, early in the morning of June 3rd the men went aboard the collier Merrimac, and made straight for the entrance to the harbor. The thrilling story of the sinking of the Merrimac is best told in Hobson's own words as related to a correspondent of the New York Herald the day he and his men were released from the Spanish prison, July 6, 1898.

"We have been thirty-three days in a Spanish prison," said Lieutenant Hobson, "and the more I think about it, the more marvelous it seems that we are alive.

"It was about 3 o'clock in the morning of June 3rd when the Merrimac entered the narrow channel and

steamed in under the guns of Morro Castle. The stillness of death prevailed. It was so dark that we could scarcely see the land. We had planned to drop our starboard anchor at a certain point to the right of the channel, reverse our engines and then swing the Merrimac around, sinking her directly across the channel.

"This plan was adhered to, but circumstances rendered its execution impossible. When the Merrimac poked her nose into the channel our trouble commenced. The deadly silence was broken by the wash of a small boat approaching from the shore. I made her out to be a picket boat.

"She ran close under the stern of the Merrimac and fired several shots, from which it seemed to be three-pounder guns. The Merrimac's rudder was carried away by the fire. That is why the collier was not sunk across the channel.

"We did not discover the loss of the rudder until Murphy cast anchor. We found that the Merrimac would not answer to her helm, and were compelled to make the best of the situation.

"The run up the channel was very exciting. The picket boat had given the alarm, and in a moment the guns of the Vizcaya, the Oquendo and the shore batteries were turned upon us. Submarine mines and torpedoes were exploded all about us, adding to the excitement. The mines did no damage, although we could hear rumbling and could feel the ship tremble.

"We were running without lights and only the darkness saved us from utter destruction. When the ship was at the desired position and we found that the rudder was gone, I called the men on deck. While they were launching the catamaran, I touched off the explosives.

"At the same moment, two torpedoes, fired from the Reina Mercedes, struck the Merrimac amidship. I cannot say whether our own explosives or the Spanish tor-

pedoes did the work, but the Merrimac was lifted out of the water and almost rent asunder.

"As she settled down we scrambled overboard and cut away the catamaran. A great cheer went up from the forts and the warships as the hull of the collier foundered, the Spaniards thinking the Merrimac was an American warship.

"We attempted to get out of the harbor on the catamaran, but as the tide was running, daylight found us still struggling in the water. Then for the first time the Spaniards saw us and a boat from the Mercedes picked us up. It was then shortly after five o'clock and we had been in the water for more than an hour.

"We were taken on board the Reina Mercedes and later we were sent to Moro Castle. In Moro we were confined in cells in the inner side of the fortress and were there the first day the fleet bombarded Moro. I could only hear the whistling of the shells and the noise they made when they struck, but I judged from the conversation of the guards that the shells did considerable damage.

"After the bombardment, Mr. Ramsden, the British Consul protested, and we were removed to the hospital. There I was separated from the other men of our crew and could see them only by special permission. Montague and Kelley fell ill two weeks ago, suffering from malaria, and I was permitted to visit them twice.

"Mr. Ramsden was very kind to us and demanded that Montague and Kelley be removed to better quarters in the hospital. This was done.

"As for myself, there is little to say. The Spaniards were not disposed to do much for the comfort of any prisoners like us, but after our army had taken some of their men as prisoners, their treatment was better."

In 1900, Lieutenant Hobson was advanced to the position of Captain in the navy. His eyesight was injured in service rendered in raising the sunken Spanish ves-

sels in Cuban waters, and also those in the harbor at Manila, and he asked to be placed on the retired list of the navy by Congress, which request was refused, and Captain Hobson tendered his resignation, with the parting message to the Navy Department that whenever his country needed him he was ready to respond.

In 1904, Captain Hobson made the race for Congress against John H. Bankhead in the Sixth Alabama Congressional District, but was unsuccessful. He again contested for the place in 1906, and was nominated and elected, and is at this writing filling the position. Captain Hobson was married in New York on May 25th, 1905, to Miss Griselda Houston Hull.

The Captain's native town of Greensboro has watched, and will continue to watch, with pleasure his brilliant career.

## Chapter XXIII.

### OLDEST INHABITANTS.

This chapter is devoted to short sketches of those citizens of Greensboro who have passed their three score and ten years. There are fifteen—nine ladies and six gentlemen. Their combined ages sum up a total of 1,184 years—an average of nearly 80 years each. The oldest person is 97 years of age, and the youngest appearing in the list is 71.

They are grand old people—forming a connecting link between the present generation and the one of the past—a generation that knew and loved the “Old South” when it was at the very zenith of its glory and power.



MRS. M. D. LIGHTFOOT,  
Greensboro's Oldest Citizen.

*Mrs. M. D. Lightfoot.*

The oldest citizen, in point of years, is Mrs. Martha Diana Lightfoot, widow of Philip C. Lightfoot who died in 1866. Mrs. Lightfoot was born in Richmond, Va., on the 11th of May, 1811, and is therefore 97 years old. She was a daughter of Dr. Hermon Byrd Snead, for many years a Baptist minister. She came to Greene county, Alabama, with her husband in 1841, and has resided in Greensboro and vicinity since that time. She has been a member of the Methodist church at this place for sixty-four years. She has been a member of the church since 1829, joining at Huntsville that year, when the Revs. A. L. P. Green and John Hannon were on that "circuit."

*Mrs. M. L. Nutting.*

Maria Louise Price was born in Newberry, S. C., October 21, 1818. She moved to Columbia, S. C., when seven years of age. In February, 1836, she was married to Samuel Nutting, and left immediately with him for Greensboro, Alabama, making the entire journey by stage coach. They arrived April 1, 1836, and since that time Mrs. Nutting has continued to live in the town. She has occupied the house on Main street in which she at present resides since 1841. In the younger years of her life she is said to have been regarded as one of the most beautiful women of this entire section.

*Mrs. Eliza A. Tunstall.*

Mrs. Eliza A. Tunstall is the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Wiley J. Croom, who came from North Carolina in 1818, and settled near Mussle Shoals, Ala., where Mrs. Tunstall was born on March 4th, 1820. She was educated at Huntsville and LaGrange, and was at school at the former place when the stars fell in 1833. She came with her parents to Greensboro in 1836, where, two years after her arrival, she was married to Dr. James Tunstall of Virginia, and has since that date con-

tinuously resided in the town. She now makes her home with her daughter, Mrs. William B. Inge in Greensboro. Mrs. Tunstall is the mother of three children, viz: Col. Wiley C. Tunstall and Mrs. Wm. B. Inge of Greensboro, and the late Dr. James Tunstall, who died some years ago. She also had the responsibility of rearing five sisters, the parents having died, leaving the little girls in her care, and they made their home with her until their marriage. The eldest sister married Mr. Eugene Hill of Greensboro; the second married Mr. Jack Chadwick of Texas; the third, Judge Wm. Rodman of North Carolina; the fourth, Mr. Luther Hill of Montgomery, and the fifth, Capt. Wm. Selden of Faunsdale.

Mrs. Tunstall joined the Presbyterian church in 1838, and has been a consistent member for the past seventy years. She is a woman of remarkably fine sense, and an honor to the community in which she has resided for so many years.

*Mrs. S. A. Kimbrough.*

Mrs. Sarah Angeline Anderson Kimbrough was born on the 27th of August, 1820, near Mt. Zion Church in Greene (now Hale) county, Ala. In 1843, she was married to Col. J. M. P. Hanna, and there were three children born of this union, viz: Robert C., Irene H., and T. A. Hanna. Her daughter, Irene, married John E. Love, Esq., at one time a prominent attorney in Greensboro, but who now resides in St. Louis, Mo. After the death of her first husband, the subject of this brief sketch married E. L. Kimbrough in 1859, and of this marriage there is only one child, Mr. Edward L. Kimbrough of St. Louis, Mo., who, with his wife, spends much of his time in Greensboro,—a gentleman noted for his fine business sense and splendid social qualities.

Mrs. Kimbrough joined Concord Presbyterian church near Havana, over seventy-five years ago, and has remained a devout member of this denomination ever

since. She has lived all of her long and useful life—extending now over a period of eighty-eight years—in Greensboro and vicinity.

*Mrs. Mary Johnson Happel.*

Mrs. Mary Johnson Happel is a daughter of Jesse Gibson and Susan Holman Gibson, and was born in Lebanon, Tenn., on November 14, 1826. She came with her parents to Greensboro in March, 1836, and lived in a log hut which was situated near where the residence of her daughter, Mrs. Wm. N. Knight now stands, which latter residence Mrs. Happel's father, Jesse Gibson, built in 1837. Mrs. Happel had a sister, Mrs. Susan Callie Yerby, who also resided nearly all her life in Greensboro. Mrs. Yerby was born in Lebanon, Tenn., and died in May, 1904, at the age of 73 years. There were two Gibson boys, William and German, both of whom were Confederate soldiers, enlisting in Selma, where they resided at the time of the breaking out of the war. In a letter before us, written by Mrs. Happel, she says:

"Greensboro improved considerably during the years 1836-37. Several new residences were built, and the town boasted of two Female Schools—one where the present Academy building is now located, and the other in a two story frame house situated on the corner where the court house now stands. This school was taught by a Mrs. Cottrell—grandma Cottrell, as we lovingly called her. She was a widow of a Methodist preacher, and mother of two preachers, Dr. Joseph Cottrell and Rev. Hugh Blair Cottrell. At this time the Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists had weather-boarded churches, not lathed and plastered. The Episcopilians had no church, but held services in the Academy. In 1839, there was a great religious revival under the pastorate of the Rev. Mr. Boatright of the Methodist church, which was a great blessing to the town. After this, each denomination felt the need of larger and better houses of worship, and proceeded to build them. The Methodists at this time were worshiping in a frame building located where the negro Methodist church stands in the rear of the Dr. Ward residence. The Methodists bought the lot on which their church is now located, and turned the old church over to the colored members."

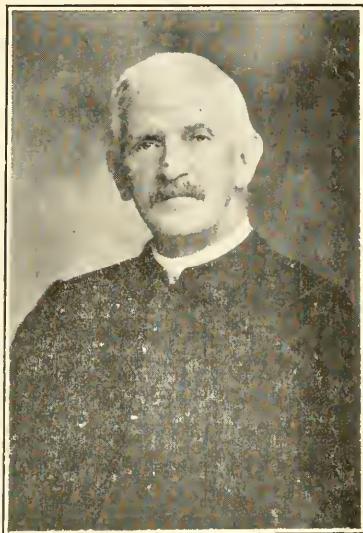
Mrs. Happel was married in Greensboro in April, 1844, to Philip Happel, Rev. Thomas Capers officiating. She resided in the town until a few years ago, when she went to live with her son, Dr. Thomas J. Happel, in Trenton, Tenn. She is a woman of remarkably fine sense, strong character, and a devout member of the Methodist church, with which denomination she united in 1843 under the pastorate of Rev. T. W. Dorman.

*Mrs. M. W. Wadsworth.*

Mrs. Mary Winifred Wadsworth was born at LaGrange, Alabama, November 22, 1829. Her parents, Dr. Alexander Sledge and Winifred Bryan Lane, moved to Alabama from North Carolina in 1822, and settled at LaGrange, in North Alabama. Dr. Sledge was one of the founders and a liberal supporter of the once famous LaGrange College. Early in 1830, Dr. Sledge moved with his family to Marengo county, and afterwards settled near Greensboro. In 1850, the subject of this sketch was married to Rev. Dr. Edward Wadsworth, who at the time, was president of LaGrange College—which College was burned by the Federal troops during the civil war. Dr. Wadsworth was a member of the first Faculty of the Southern University, and while the buildings were being erected he moved to Greensboro and served the Methodist church at this place for two years, that period being the limit a pastor was allowed to serve a church. While awaiting the completion of the building of the Southern University, Dr. Wadsworth served the Methodist church at Selma for two years, and in 1859 he returned to Greensboro and entered upon his duties as a member of the University Faculty, which position he held for a number of years. He died in 1883, at his home in Greensboro. Mrs. Wadsworth has been identified with the town for the past half century, and no one was ever held in higher esteem. She has been a member of the Methodist church for sixty-two years.

Her sisters, Mrs. Margaret J. Peterson and Mrs. Belle

Castleman, and her brothers, Messrs. Alexander and James Sledge are now residents of Greensboro.



REV. RICHARD HOOKER COBBS, D. D.,

Who has for the past forty-eight years been the Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Greensboro.

*Rev. R. H. Cobbs, D. D.*

The Rev. Dr. Richard Hooker Cobbs came to Greensboro in 1860, and became rector of St. Paul's church, which position he held continuously for forty-seven years, resigning as rector in September, 1907,—but decided in March, 1908, to again accept the rectorship of this church. He was born in Montgomery, September 7th, 1835, and is a son of Bishop Nicholas Hamner Cobbs, the first Bishop of the Diocese of Alabama. Dr. Cobbs graduated from the State University of Alabama in the class of 1855. In May, 1862, he married Fannie A. Avery, who is yet with him to cheer and bless his declining

years. Dr. Cobbs is much beloved by the people he has served so long and faithfully.

*Mrs. Margaret C. Gulley.*

Among the oldest people now residing in Greensboro is Mrs. Margaret Clemintine Gulley, the mother of Frank D. Gulley, one of the most highly respected citizens of the town. She has two other children living, to-wit: Walter Gulley and E. L. Gulley who reside in Tuscaloosa and Jackson, Miss., respectively. Mrs. Gulley's parents were Samuel Oliver Davidson and Nancy Catherine Lowry, Mrs. Davidson being the daughter of Mr. Lowry, among the early comers to Greensboro. Mrs. Gulley was born near Salisbury, N. C., April 6th, 1827. At the age of thirteen years, she came to Greensboro and attended school at the Greensboro Female Academy, which was then in charge of Mr. Fay. She also went there after Mr. Bestor was made President. She has been a member of the church since 1843. On July 25, 1855, she was married to Bryant Gulley, by Rev. James C. Mitchell, Pastor of the Greensboro Presbyterian church. Mr. Gulley was at one time a prominent merchant at old Erie. After their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Gulley resided in Greensboro for six years, and then moved to Greene county, Alabama, where they resided until Mr. Gulley's death on December 24th, 1887, at the age of 82 years. The next year Mrs. Gulley removed to Greensboro where she has since lived with her son, Frank D. Gulley.

*Mrs. Elizabeth Ward.*

Mrs. Elizabeth Ward was born in or near Greensboro, Alabama, in the year 1836. She is a daughter of the late Col. John H. Burton, who came to this section in 1833 from Campbell county, Virginia, and settled about eight miles from Greensboro in the prairies. In 1850 he moved to Greensboro and purchased

the lot now owned by Madison Jones. He was a prominent citizen for many years. Mrs. Ward's mother was Miss Whitworth, a daughter of Jeremiah Whitworth, also a Virginian, who owned and resided on the (now) Hobbie place near Cedarville. There were four children of this marriage, J. L. Burton, of Crescent City, Fla.; Dr. J. W. Burton and W. C. Burton (both deceased), and Elizabeth Burton. All three of the sons were Confederate soldiers. Miss Burton married the late Dr. Thomas R. Ward in 1858, who was for more than forty years a prominent physician in Greensboro. Dr. Ward was a North Carolinian by birth, and came to Greensboro when quite a young man. He first practiced medicine with the late Dr. F. M. Peterson, and afterwards alone until his death in 1897. He was among the brightest and most prominent Masons in the State, and for twenty-two years was Master of the Lodge at Greensboro. He officiated as Master of the Lodge at the laying of the corner stone of the Southern University in 1857. Dr. and Mrs. Ward had three children, to-wit: Dr. E. Burton Ward, an honored physician in Selma, Col. Thomas R. Ward, a prosperous merchant of Greensboro, and Mrs. Bessie Norvell Ward Colebeck, who died in June, 1906.

Mrs. Elizabeth Ward was educated in Lynchburg, Va. For more than half a century she has been a member of the Methodist church. She is much beloved by a large circle of friends.

*Hon. George Erwin.*

At the time this is written (1908) Hon. George Erwin is the oldest native-born citizen of Greensboro. He was born in the year 1834 in the then corporate limits of the town, and has resided here ever since. He is a son of the late John Erwin, the eminent jurist, who was among the earliest inhabitants of Greensboro. Mr. Erwin is a highly cultured gentleman, and represented Hale county in the Legislature the session of 1884-85. He

married a daughter of the late Col. Cadwalader Jones of North Carolina, in 1857—they having celebrated their “golden wedding” in 1907. Though 74 years of age, Mr. Erwin’s intellect is as clear and forceful as ever, and he lives among his books when not looking after his farming interests. His memory of past events is remarkably good, and to him we are indebted for much valuable data contained in this volume.

*Mrs. M. C. Keady.*

Mrs. Martha Chambers Keady is a daughter of John and Katherine Chambers, and was born at Canonsburg, Pa., September 12, 1837. She was well educated in the schools of her native State. In August, 1869, she was married to Dr. W. G. Keady, who was born in Baltimore, Md., in 1833. He was a Confederate soldier for four years—first joining Watson’s (Mississippi) Battery. At the siege of Vicksburg he lost an arm, and upon the fall of the town he was taken prisoner and sent to Camp Douglass, where he remained until his exchange. He then went to Georgia and joined the Confederate troops, and remained with them until the close of the war. After the cessation of hostilities he taught school at Macon, Ga., and other places. In 1871, Dr. Keady entered the Presbyterian ministry. His first charge was at Williamsville, Ill. He came to Greensboro from Kentucky in 1889, and served as pastor of the Presbyterian church at this place until his death in 1902. He was also for several years President of the Greensboro Female Academy. Early in life, Mrs. Keady joined the church, and for many long years has been a consistent member of the Presbyterian denomination. She is a woman of remarkably fine intellect, and is much beloved by a large circle of friends. She has two children, Geo. K. Keady editor of *The Beacon*, with whom she resides, and Wm M. Keady, a prosperous druggist at Norcross, Ga.

*Rev. E. M. Turner.*

Rev. E. M. Turner, who has, for the past twenty years, been a citizen of Greensboro, was born in Walker county, Alabama, December 1, 1836. His father, Rev. John Turner, was a Methodist minister, and was admitted to the Virginia conference in 1797. In the course of his ministry he served Newbern, S. C., Caswell, N. C., and towns in Virginia. At the Conference of 1801 he located, on account of ill health and moved to Walker county, Ala., and in 1844 he moved to Greene county, where he resided until his death. His wife was a Miss Kimbrough of North Carolina. The subject of this sketch, Rev. E. M. Turner, was educated in the common schools in Greene county, Ala. He joined the church in 1845. When 8 or 9 years of age, his father put him in a printing office at Eutaw, Ala., The Whig, then conducted by Houston & Nunnalee, where he remained for quite a while. Enlisted in the Confederate army in April, 1861, in a regiment formed by Hon. W. R. Smith. Went into camp of instruction at Tuscumbia, Ala. In September he was elected First Lieutenant of Company E, and on reaching Virginia was promoted to Captain of the Company. The Regimental number was the 26th Alabama, and upon the resignation of Smith, who was elected to the Confederate Congress, E. A. O'Neal was made Colonel. Captain Turner served under both Lee and Jackson. In 1864, he was transferred to the Western army, and served under Johnston and Hood until the surrender at Greensboro, N. C., in 1865. He has a war record that few possess, but one, by conversing with him, would never know he served four years in the army, so modest is he with reference to matters pertaining strictly to himself.

Capt. Turner joined the Alabama Conference of the Methodist church at Mobile in December, 1865, and was in the active ministry for many years. He is spending

his declining years with his wife and daughter in his neat and modest home in Greensboro, among friends who honor him for his upright, Christian life, and his genial, sunny disposition. He has three sons and one daughter: J. G. Turner of Greensboro, Ala., Dr. E. K. Turner of Oxford, Ga., Walter Turner of Atlanta, Ga., and Miss Clara Turner of Greensboro.

*The Stickneys.*

Thomas F. Stickney is possibly the oldest male resident of Greensboro. He was born April 14th, 1830, at the old homestead three miles west of town, now owned and occupied by his brother, Edward L. Stickney. His father, Joseph Blodgett Stickney, came from England in 1800, and located in North Carolina, where he married Harriet Grice. After living there for some time, he moved to this section, and located three miles west of the present town of Greensboro, and about the year 1820, he purchased 840 acres of land from the famous General Lefebvre, who had come in possession of it under what is known as the French grant. Mr. Thomas Stickney relates that he had often heard his father speak of the noted Frenchman—that he was a frequent visitor to the Stickney home, and the descendants now have in their possession a number of mementoes that were presented the elder Stickney by the General. Lefebvre frequently visited the town of Greensboro in its early days. Of this distinguished character, Pickett has the following in his History of Alabama:

"A colony of French sought Alabama as an asylum from Bourbon persecution. The winter of 1816 and 1817 found many of these distinguished refugees in Philadelphia. An ordinance of Louis had forced them from France on account of their attachment to Napoleon, who was then an exile upon St. Helena.

"Among those who were exiled was Count Lefebvre Desnoettes, who had been a cavalry officer under Bonaparte with the rank of lieutenant-general. Accompanying Napoleon in his march to Russia, he rode with him in his carriage in his disastrous retreat over the snows of that country. He had served in Spain in many bloody wars, and was an active participant in the dread-

ful battle of Sarragossa. Vivacious, active and handsome in person and graceful in carriage, he was the most splendid rider of the age in which he lived. His imperial master was so much attached to him that when forced to abdicate the throne and about to depart for Elba and while addressing his weeping and sorrowing officers at Fontainbleau, said, 'I cannot take leave of you all, but will embrace General Desnoettes in behalf of you all.' He then pressed him to his bosom in the most affectionate manner. Napoleon frequently made him valuable presents, and influenced his cousin, the sister of the celebrated banker, La Fitte to espouse him. While he was at Demopolis, that lady made an attempt to join him in exile, but being shipwrecked on the coast of England, was forced to return to France. At length she negotiated with the French government for his return, and, through the influence of her family, succeeded in obtaining permission for him to reside in Belgium. This induced Count Lefebvre in 1823, to leave Alabama in the ship Albion, which was wrecked upon the coast of Ireland, at Old Kinsale, in view of an immense number of people who were standing on the cliffs. The distinguished refugee was washed overboard, and the ocean became his grave."

J. J. Cluis, mentioned elsewhere in this volume as having kept a hotel in Greensboro, came to this section with Count Lefebvre, and was a man of note under the Napoleonic rule in France.

Joseph B. Stickney was the father of eleven children, as follows: Rev. William A. Stickney, Frederick G., Joseph B., Edward L., Thomas F., John, and Richard H. Stickney, the latter being at the time of his death in February, 1904, among the most prosperous and highly respected citizens of Greensboro. The daughters were: Mrs. Eliza Street, Mrs. Harriet J. Charles, Mrs. Olivia Morgan, and Miss Mary Stickney, all deceased.

Mr. Thomas F. Stickney says that soon after his father settled near Greensboro others came from North Carolina and located to the west of the present town,—among the number, Offa Shivers, Stith Evans, Benjamin Evans, the Morrisons and the Arnolds.

*William A. Avery.*

The subject of this sketch, William A. Avery, was born four miles north of Greensboro on March 1, 1832. His father was William Ingram Avery, who came from North Carolina in 1818, and located near the present

town of Greensboro. He built the first frame house ever erected in the town in 1818, for Peck, Brewer and Bates. It was located on the site on which is now situated the two story brick building occupied now by George Findlay and The Watchman office. William A. Avery has resided all his life in the territory of what is now Hale county. For the past twenty years he has lived with his family in Greensboro. In 1855 he married Miss Sarah Elizabeth Walton, daughter of the late Joseph Walton, who is remembered by many of the people as among the best and most highly respected citizens of Hale county. Mr. Avery served for several years during the war between the States in the Confederate arsenal at Selma, Ala., engaged in the work of making gun carriages. He was so employed when Wilson's Raiders captured the city. Mr. Avery has been a member of the Methodist church for the past 45 years. He has always enjoyed the reputation of being a good citizen and a good neighbor.

*Thomas J. Kinnaird.*

Thomas J. Kinnaird is among the oldest citizens of this vicinity. He has resided in Greensboro for a number of years past. He is the son of James A. Kinnaird and Mary McMaster Kinnaird. The father came to this county when quite a young man from North Carolina. His mother was a native of Greene county, Alabama. They resided at Green Springs, near Havana, Ala., at which place Thomas J. Kinnaird was born April 30th, 1830, and he has lived in what is now Hale county all his life. In 1855 he married Miss Keziah Lavender of Newbern, Ala. In 1862 Mr. Kinnaird enlisted in the Confederate army, and was a member of Company C, 36th Alabama Regiment—Captain Wemyss' company—and was in the Tennessee army and saw actual service from Chickamauga to Spanish Fort. He served for four

years, and was in many battles, but did not receive a single wound.

Mr. Kinnaird has been a member of the Baptist church for the past fifty years, having joined Bethsaida church in 1858. He is one of the original members of the present Greensboro Baptist church, being present at the organization in February, 1894. He has always enjoyed the respect and confidence of the people among whom he has lived so long.

*John L. Croom.*

One of the oldest living former residents of Greensboro is Mr. John L. Croom, who has kindly furnished the author valuable information for this volume. He was born at LaGrange, Ala., Nov. 26, 1826, and came with his father, Wiley J. Croom, to Greensboro in 1834, and resided here until 1850, when he moved to Matagorda, Texas, and for the past fifty-eight years has been a resident of Matagorda and Wharton counties. He served for ten years as County and District Clerk of Matagorda, and since the expiration of his term of office he has been engaged in the real estate business. He was orderly sergeant in Company A—Andrew L. Pickens, Captain, John R. Coffee, Colonel—First Regiment Alabama Volunteers in the Mexican War, and was honorably discharged from service, on account of disability to perform military duty, in July, 1846. In November of the same year he married Miss Ellen R. Davis, at Matagorda, Texas, a lady who was born and reared at Franklin, Tenn. She died in Wharton, Texas, in October, 1901. There were two children from this union, Judge W. J. Croom, and Mrs. Rosa F. McCamly, widow of the late Fred C. McCamly, a prominent lawyer of Texas. Mr. Croom is a brother of Mrs. Eliza A. Tunstall of Greensboro, and an uncle of Col. Wiley C. Tunstall of this place. He is spending the evening of his life happily

with his children, grand children and great grand children in Wharton, Texas.

Mr. Croom furnishes the following list of old citizens of Greensboro whom he remembers as residing here during his early residence in the town:

Gen. Patrick May, soldier of the war of 1812; John May, cotton planter; Charles or Robert Fortune, dealer in stock, and also kept a stage stand on his place at the forks of the road south of the depot; James McDonald, cotton planter; Dr. McCann; Shelby Chadwick, merchant; I. N. Chadwick, merchant; Jack Shackelford, merchant; V. Boardman, jeweler; Sam Cowin, hotel keeper; John G. Harvey, editor *Alabama Beacon*; Matthew Hobson, planter—father of Mrs. W. C. Tunstall and Mrs. W. D. Lee; A. Benners, Edward Benners, Jas. D. Webb, Wm. P. Webb, John Erwin, Wm. M. Murphy, Rob't. B. Waller, Henry Watson, Rob't D. Huckabee, law-  
vers; Samuel Webb, merchant; Albert Hendon, merchant; Thomas M. Johnston, merchant and planter; Maj. Bell, soldier of war of 1812; his sons were John, Bushrod, William and Frank Bell; Frederick Peck, merchant, and first postmaster; D. P. Stockton; Joseph and Jesse Seligman, the latter became a noted banker in New York; A. C. Horton, who was the first Lt. Governor of Texas; Dr. Sydney Vaughan; James Levi Tunstall, Thomas Webb, Wm. T. Hendon, P. W. Kittrell, Wm. Street, all physicians; one son of Dr. Kittrell and another of Dr. Street became district judges in Texas; Rev. D. P. Bestor; Rev. Sydenham Witherspoon; Rev. John DuBois, first manufacturer of cotton gins; Samuel Duncan, Benjamin and Geo. W. Briggs; Andrew J. Briggs, Samuel G. Hardaway, sheriff; Jos. Atkins, druggist; A. Stollenwerck, druggist; A. M. Dorman, merchant; Col. Isaac Croom, planter, and president of State Agricultural Society; Jessie H. Croom, planter; Dr. Stephen Davis; Dr. Wm. T. Barnum; Calvin Norris, planter; Dr. Wm. Jones; Samuel Boykin; Nat M. Murphy, lawyer; Mr. Murray,

first fashionable tailor; Mrs. Pasteur, Mrs. Dickson, Mrs. Fowler, among the first settlers of Greensboro; Dr. R. U. DuBois, dentist; Samuel DuBois; David Barckley; Joseph Simmons, dry goods clerk and dancing master; Dr. Richard Croom; Mr. Reynolds, first tinner in the town; Dr. Jos. Reynolds, his son; B. F. Avery, ancestor of B. F. Avery & Sons of Louisville, Ky., celebrated for making Avery's plows; Thos. Archer, a great wit and ladies' man; Rev. Thos. Chilton, grandfather of ex-Congressman Horace Chilton of Texas; Dr. Rufus Haywood, an eminent surgeon; Wm. P. Eaton, graduate of Yale college, school teacher; Mr. Whelan, tailor and only Roman Catholic in Greensboro in the early days.



## Chapter XXIV.

### CHAPTER OF MISCELLANEOUS.

#### *Mayors.*

Diligent search has failed to disclose a satisfactory list of the names of those who have served as Mayor of Greensboro, but we give all that could be found, as follows: John Clement, Charles Whelan, James J. Garrett, James M. Hobson, Thomas R. Roulhac, Charles E. Waller, L. J. Lawson, Amasa M. Dorman, W. W. Powers, E. B. Randolph, Robert F. Otts, Wm. E. W. Yerby, N. L. Castleman, John G. Apsey, Jr.

#### *Marshals.*

The office of marshal was not created until 1859, and since that time the following have served in that capacity: Jno. B. Williams, George W. Briggs, Wm. A. Bell, Wm. Roberts, J. D. Hamilton, F. H. Johnson, W. P. Johnson, A. B. Mackey, W. E. Torbett, J. W. Otts, John Erwin.

#### *Night Watchmen.*

It seems that it has been only of recent years that Greensboro realized the importance of having a night watchman, for so far as the records of the old days show, no such office existed—that is to say as far back as forty years ago. Those who have held this office are: Ed. Gayle, M. C. Knight, C. C. Wilkerson, Reuben Johnson, D. A. Seale, Rufus DuBois, Walter Seale, Wm. Stokes.

On the night of October 16, 1874, two Greensboro citizens—John H. Atkins and J. T. Walker—became engaged in a personal difficulty on the sidewalk between the deGraffenreid & Evins law office and Dr. Carson's front

gate, and opened fire upon each other. The night watchman at that time was M. C. Knight, who was standing across the street. He rushed in between the two men, and a ball from one of the weapons struck him and killed him almost instantly. It was never definitely known from which of the two pistols the fatal shot was fired. Both the men were tried and acquitted. Knight was a comparative stranger in Greensboro, coming, he stated upon his arrival here, from McMinnville, Tenn. Very little was ever learned about who he was, or why he came to this place.



FRANCIS MARION PETERSON, M. D.,

Who was a distinguished physician and honored citizen of Greensboro from 1846 until his death in 1898.

*Physicians.*

Greensboro has always been blessed with the best medical skill in the person of her physicians. Among those who formerly practiced their profession here may be

mentioned Francis Marion Peterson, Wm. Jones, John H. Parrish, T. C. Osborne, Charles Whelan, Beverly Griggs, James J. Peterson, Elisha Young, Joseph M. Pickett, Thomas R. Ward, David J. Castleman.

#### *Population.*

The population of Greensboro in 1860 was (about) 1600; in 1870 it was 1760; in 1880, 1834; in 1890, 1759; in 1900, 2416. These figures (except for 1860) were obtained from the Census Bureau in Washington, D. C.

#### *Burning of the Greene County Court House.*

So intimately was Eutaw and Greensboro associated in the days before Hale was made a county, that a note of the fact that the court house at Eutaw was destroyed by fire on March 20th, 1868, will not be out of place in these pages. From the Alabama Beacon of March 28, 1868, the following is taken:

#### “THE COURT HOUSE AT EUTAW DESTROYED BY FIRE

—Greene county has sustained a heavy loss. The Court House at Eutaw was destroyed by fire on Friday morning of last week, with all the records, papers etc., in the office of the Circuit Clerk, in which the fire originated. The records and papers in the office of the Sheriff, Register in Chancery and County Treasurer were all saved. The Eutaw Court House was one of the most commodious and costly in the State. Its destruction at any time would have been a heavy loss to the county, but at this juncture, when most people find it extremely difficult to support their families and pay their taxes, it will prove a most serious calamity, especially so, in view of the loss of the valuable records and papers. The circumstances connected with the origin of the fire, as we have heard them, leave no room for doubt as to its having been the work of an incendiary. They also create the presumption that the deed was done for the purpose of destroying certain records or papers in the Clerk's office.”

#### *Ribbon Cane.*

The first genuine ribbon (or sugar) cane ever successfully planted in Hale county was cultivated seven miles Northeast of Greensboro by Rev. A. R. Ramey. In 1873 he brought fifty stalks from Citronelle, Ala., and planted

it. The next year he had a quantity of stalks to sell to his neighbors, and from this small beginning the molasses crop of the farmers, especially of Northeast, West and North Hale, has grown to be quite a profitable one, —the Greensboro market being supplied to a large extent with the home-grown article.

*First Appearance of English Sparrow.*

The English sparrow, that destructive and troublesome little pest, is comparatively a recent comer to Greensboro. The first note of its appearance was in November, 1885, and the little birds were viewed with interest and curiosity by the people. Since then the tribe has increased, and is almost as the sands of the seashore for multitude.

*Cotton Worms.*

For many years prior to 1890, the cotton worms would annually strip the leaves from the cotton plant, but that year, for the first time within the memory of "the oldest inhabitant," they failed to do any damage to the cotton plant in this section, nor have the pests returned in any considerable numbers since then.

*The Stars and Stripes.*

The first United States flag that was unfurled on a building in Greensboro since 1861 was in May, 1898, and was floated from Hamilton Hall, the boarding annex of the Southern University, and another from the Greensboro Hotel. This was done in honor of the victory of the American navy under Admiral Dewey over the Spanish fleet in the harbor of Manila. Since that time the Stars and Stripes have not been strangers to the eyes of the inhabitants of Greensboro.

*Practical Joke of the Old Days.*

Among the earliest watchmakers and jewelers of Greensboro was Thomas Rainey, an Irishman, fresh from the

old country. He was always ready with his wit and also ready at all times for a drink. Contemporary with him, although in a different line of business, was William Scarff, the undertaker. Rainey and Scarff were the best of friends, and spent many hours talking together. One day Rainey, when about half drunk, told some friends that he wanted to play a joke on his friend Scarff, and asked them to come in and arrange him in his bed as a dead man. The friends complied and spread a sheet over Rainey, who told them to go tell Scarff that Rainey was dead, and to come up and take his measure for a coffin. (In those days the undertaker always took the measure of a corpse before bringing the casket.) The friends went to Scarff and sadly told him of Rainey's demise, and he expressed much sorrow over the news. He went at once to the room of the supposed dead man, and after again, with tears in his eyes, bemoaning the death of his old comrade, he began to remove the sheet. When he had taken it from the body, and was in the act of removing his shoes, Rainey very gently said: "Be careful, friend Scarff, and don't hurt my corns." Scarff made the air blue for a while with his denunciations of the "low down trick" that had been played on him.

As stated above, Rainey was among the early jewelers of the town. He purchased, forty or more years ago, from Volney Boardman, whom he succeeded in the jeweler's business, the big clock which is now in Dr. Jay's drug store. For more than half a century this clock regulated the time for the citizens of Greensboro and surrounding country. Charles Jones gave it to Dr. Jay when he went out of the jeweler's business in 1895. The old clock is still ticking away, and keeps the time as accurately as it did when first installed.

#### *Local Telephone.*

In 1895, T. B. Fitzpatrick was granted a franchise for a period of twenty-five years to establish and operate a

telephone system in Greensboro. He at once went to work on the line, but died in September of that year, and his wife, Mrs. Lucy Fitzpatrick, carried the work to completion. On the 15th of April, 1896, the local telephone commenced business and was conducted by Mrs. Fitzpatrick until 1907, when she sold the property to the Southern Bell Company, who now operate it.

#### *Long Distance Telephone.*

The Southern Bell Telephone Company was granted the privilege of entering the town by the Mayor and Council in the year 1895. It did only a "long distance" business in Greensboro until 1907, when the company purchased the local telephone system from Mrs. Fitzpatrick, since which time it has had exclusive charge of both the long distance and the local telephone service.

#### *Authors.*

Greensboro has produced authors of note. Of the number: Dr. J. M. P. Otts, who wrote "The Fifth Gospel, or the Land Where Jesus Lived," "At Mother's Knee," "Unanswered Questions," "The Gospel in Pagan Religions," "Laconisms," "A Dream About My School Days."

Judge A. A. Coleman, who has written many poems, which are published in a volume entitled "Poets of America."

Miss Martha Young, has written a book entitled "Besie Bell," also "Plantation Songs."

Mrs. Martha Gielow, "Old Plantation Days," "Mammy's Reminiscences," and others.

James J. Garrett, "The Forty-fourth Alabama Regiment."

Rev. Henry Trawick, "The Modern Revival."

Miss Anne Hobson, "In Old Alabama."

Dr. J. T. Littleton, "History of Pocahontas."

Captain R. P. Hobson, "Sinking of the Merrimac," "Buck Jones of Annapolis."

Prof. D. P. Christenberry, "History of the Southern University."

*Planters.*

Greensboro has been the home of many prominent planters and large land owners. Of the number may be mentioned: John Nelson, Allen C. Jones, Wm. R. Smaw, D. F. McCrary, J. W. McCrary, J. H. Y. Webb, John W. Walton, Gideon Nelson, Wiley Croom, Ivey F. Lewis, Robert W. Withers, Wm. B. Inge, Sr., Dr. Wm. Jones, Thomas M. Johnston, S. D. Owens, E. T. Pasteur, Reuben Seay, Henry Watson, R. H. McFadden, Sr., S. S. Latimer, W. W. Powers, Edward Bayol, John Erwin, Thos. Seay, Dr. Drake and others. All of the above named gentlemen are dead.

*Nut Grass.*

Probably there are those of the present generation who think that the cocoa, or nut grass, has always been in Greensboro and vicinity, but such is not the fact. The author has it on the authority of Hon. Charles E. Waller, who knows the history of the grass in this section, that the first appearance of cocoa was in the yard of Dr. Richard Carter Randolph, two miles east of Greensboro. Mrs. Randolph had one of the largest and most beautiful flower yards ever in this vicinity, and she would frequently order plants and shrubbery from New Orleans, and more than half a century ago there came in these plants or shrubbery either the seed or the nuts of the cocoa. When the grass first made its appearance in the Randolph yard no one knew what it was, and no attempt was made to eradicate it, and from this beginning it has spread, in various ways, over the entire section.

It is worthy of note that Dr. Randolph was a close relative to the famous "John Randolph of Roanoke," and was, before he moved to Greensboro, a surgeon in the United States navy. He was quite wealthy, and owned thousands of acres of land east of the corporate limits

of the town. In the midst of these broad acres he erected a palatial home, which he called "Oakleigh" and furnished it most elegantly. He and his wife entertained lavishly, and many brilliant parties were given beneath their hospitable roof. The front yard was a scene of beauty, filled with flowers and shrubbery of every description, and adorned here and there with statues of the finest Italian marble. The Doctor and his wife are buried in the family graveyard hard by the place where once stood their elegant home.

In the after years the house was burned,—the brick were moved away, and the property passed into other hands, and now a modest cottage adorns the site where once stood the mansion of the old days.

Dr. Randolph was the father of Major R. C. Randolph, who married Sallie Julia Pickett, daughter of Albert J. Pickett, the historian. His other children were Mrs. R. I. Hill, Mrs. J. W. Tayloe and Mrs. Rittenhouse Moore.

#### *Cherted Street.*

For a long number of years, during the winter season, the Main street of Greensboro from the cemetery to the depot was almost as bad as the average country road. Teams were frequently stalled in the mud—particularly on the small hill just before getting to the depot, and also in front of the Lightfoot place. In the business portion of the town in rainy weather, the street would get in an almost impassable condition, and the odors emanating from the mud were very offensive.

In 1900, this was remedied by the Mayor and Council making a contract to have the street cherted from the depot to the cemetery. G. M. Burkhalter & Co., of Birmingham, were the contractors, and the work cost a little over \$10,000. The town, in July, 1900, issued \$10,000 worth of bonds to pay for it. The indebtedness bears 6 per cent. interest, payable semi-annually. Said bonds specify that on July 1st, 1921, one thousand dollars of

the principal is to be paid, and one thousand dollars each succeeding July until the entire debt is liquidated.

#### *Cotton Oil Mill.*

The Greensboro Cotton Oil Mill was established near the depot in 1902, and was exempted from taxation for a period of ten years by the town authorities in order to induce the promoters to locate it here. It is owned by local capitalists, and has prospered.

#### *Telegraph Lines.*

In 1869, the citizens of Greensboro donated a thousand dollars to induce the Western Union Telegraph Company to extend its line from Marion to this place. The first office was opened in Greensboro during that year. It was through the untiring efforts of Henry Beck, Al Stollenwerck and A. S. Jeffries that the line was brought here.

Twenty-four years after this, the citizens do not appear to have been so anxious for a telegraph line as formerly, for in 1893, the Postal Company humbly petitioned the Mayor and Council to allow it to enter the town and maintain an office,—which petition was granted, and the Postal opened for business in Greensboro in 1893.

#### *Public Halls.*

By public halls is meant a place where public meetings were held. The very first that existed in Greensboro was somewhere about the year 1834, and was located on the Northeast corner of the lot of Col. W. C. Tunstall, almost opposite the residence of Judge W. C. Christian on Main street. It was a one-story frame structure, and was known as the "Theatre Building," from the fact that the traveling troupes would have their shows therein.

The next public hall of which there is any record was in the upper story of a frame building that was located

where the Steinhart store now stands on Main street. It was known as Lyceum Hall.

After this place fell into disuse, Washington Hall came into prominence, and for some years the public speakings and gatherings were held in this place.

Franklin Hall was the next in order, and is still standing. It was the room above the stores in the block in which D. W. Taylor's store is at present located. Besides other public uses to which it was put, the military companies used it as a drilling place.

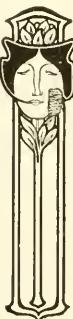
After Amasa M. Dorman built the Dorman block on the South side of Main street and fitted up "Dorman's Hall," the Franklin Hall ceased to be used as a place for public gatherings. At the time it was erected, "Dorman's Hall," with its wooden benches, and its raised stage, was accounted the finest public hall in this section. Many stirring scenes were enacted within the compass of its walls, —the most exciting, perhaps, being in the latter part of 1860, when a discussion of the question was had as to whether Alabama should secede from the Union or not. Hot and angry words were passed between those who differed on the subject and friendships of a lifetime were shattered. And it was in this place that the military company, known as "The Greensboro Guards," was organized and drilled before starting for the war. Here the strolling minstrels would come and amuse the people with their shows, and it was here that the amateurs of the town would display their talent as actors and actresses. The old hall served its day and generation well, and stood until 1903, when it was torn away to make room for the present commodious store building.

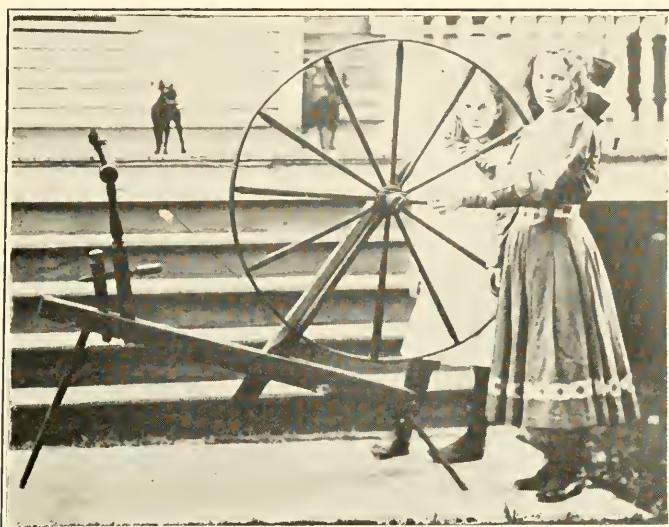
In 1897, J. A. Blunt erected a splendid public hall above his stores on the South side of Main street. The buildings were burned in November, 1902. In 1903 Mr. Blunt rebuilt the burned district, and fitted up the present beautiful Opera House.

*The Greensboro Dramatic Association.*

Nearly forty years ago—to be exact, in 1869—there existed in Greensboro an organization known as “The Greensboro Dramatic Association,” the object of which was “for the purpose of aiding the destitute of Greensboro and vicinity.” The Association gave dramatic exhibitions once a month, and the proceeds were devoted to charitable purposes. The first play enacted was entitled “Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady,” and was a great success. There were no lady members of the company, and the characters in the play that required ladies were taken by the men, who would dress in feminine attire. The Dramatic Association accomplished much good during its career. The following were the members, as gathered from the minutes:

L. J. Lawson, S. C. Carson, Henry Boardman, Alex H. Williams, W. P. Johnson, Henry H. Hooton, H. Humphries, Robert H. Jackson, John A. Peterson, John M. Gayle, Stawell W. Gillespie, Robert B. Monette, Charles T. Briggs, Charles E. Waller, Porter K. Carson, L. M. Osborn, Ed. Nutting and John Atkins. Dr. Simonds was manager of the Company.





AN OLD FASHION SPINNING WHEEL.

*A Relic of the Old Days.*

The above is a good representation of the old spinning wheel that was so common in the South in Colonial times, and in the days before the Civil War. It, together with the ponderous old loom, was the forerunner of the modern cotton factory. Almost every family was supplied with a "Spinning Jenny" and a loom before the advent of cotton and yarn mills. The Spinning Jenny was invented by James Hargreaves in 1767, and for nearly a hundred years its use was continued—improvements upon the original being but slowly made.

It will not be a great many years before these old relics will be entirely out of existence,—hence it is that the picture of the one which has been in possession of the writer's ancestors for nearly sixty years is given above.

## CONCLUSION.

Our task is finished. It is with a feeling of sadness rather than of joy that the pen is laid aside, because it has been purely a labor of love that has engaged our attention for some years past in the preparation of these pages. The work had grown to be fascinating, and really a part of existence.

It is our earnest hope that the future historian may derive as much pleasure from a continuation of the History of Greensboro in the years to come as has been afforded this writer in the prosecution of the work.





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